A STUDY IN POSTHUMANISM

A Prolegomenon to Leslie Dewart's Philosophy

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INTRODUCTION

Today, many Western philosophers have shifted their attention to a variety of techno-digital topics and to so-called Artificial Intelligence due to the presence of the internet as a new means of mass media communications. [2] Within philosophical communications, Shannon Vallor's topic of "technomoral wisdom" is an example of a techno-digital topic. My attention in this posthuman study is focused on the visionary and pre-internet and pre-AI philosopher, Leslie Dewart. While Vallor's topic may be new, her conclusions are not. The moral wisdom outlined in her book, which I maintain it is a retrograde wisdom, is counter to what Leslie Dewart, influenced by a spirit of philosophical renewal, (and unacknowledged posthuman thought), promotes in his critical yet faithful approach to the seeds of phenomenological thinking as evident in the the Fathers of Vatican II. To her credit, however, Vallor acknowledges the particularity of her attempt to reinvest culture with a classical solution. "*This* book recommends a classical solution: an energetic (perhaps even desperate) collective effort to reinvest our cultures in the habits of moral self-cultivation and education for technomoral wisdom," she wrote. [3]

That being said, this Prolegomenon to Dewart's writings is not an exposé of his philosophical thinking. Rather, I intend it to be an acknowledgement and introduction to the "spirit of the times" in which he wrote that had a formative and insightful influence on his thinking. With the benefit of hindsight, I maintain that Dewart, in fact, has anticipated a posthuman perspective. Engaging the "spirit of the times" is not that unusual for critical individuals among the Christian faithful. Within the Church of England, the Archbishop of York at the Church Congress of 1896 noted that:

> The terms in which that truth has been stated, whether in the writings of individual Christians, however eminent, or in the Confessions of separate branches of the Church, may well require from time to time some reconsideration. … From age to age there ought to be a growing apprehension of the purport of the great message and of its bearing on

[2] An entry from Wikipedia states: "Podcasting has been considered a converged medium (a medium that brings together audio, the web and portable media players), as well as a disruptive technology that has caused some individuals in radio broadcasting to reconsider established practices and preconceptions about audiences, consumption, production and distribution."
[3] Vallor's italics, *Technology* 245.

> personal needs, conditioned by the progress of knowledge and the special circumstances of each succeeding age. There is no reason why we should not reconsider our statements of doctrine … if under the guidance of the Holy Spirit they might be made more helpful to the welfare of the Church itself and to the comfort of individuals. … Are there not, in the estimation of most of us, one or two at least of the Thirty-nine Articles which might be brought more in to accordance with the needs as well the spirit of the present day? [4]

Perhaps not intentional, but the Archbishop's thinking anticipated that of Vatican II from my persective. Within my philosophical perspective the prolegomenon focuses on the primary factor that has enabled Dewart's thought to develop along the trajectory that it has. It is the spirit of renewal within Western philosophy, prepared in the era immediately preceding Vatican II, that has fueled his thought. Just as Dewart's thought has fueled novel notions within posthumanism. The historian, Roger Aubert (1914-2009) describes this period of renewal, known as Catholic Modernism, as "a movement which sought to remain in the Church but was still ready to accept from the modern world all that seemed irrefutable in the realm of thought and healthy in the line of institutions, so that Catholicism could adapt itself to *an altered world* and rid itself of apparently contingent and outmoded elements." [5] Without that spirit of renewal towards an altered world Dewart's thinking most likely would have developed along classical lines. The spirit of renewal of modern religious thinking has influenced the critical understanding of many Western philosophers, theologians and sociologists within academia and has distinguished (and surpassed in many cases) their contributions to philosophical thought from that of previous ages. This prolegomenon attempts to lay out an informed context in order to assist the reader in gaining a proper understanding of what Dewart (and others) have said within a contemporary professional academic context, that I take as being nothing less than an anticipation of posthuman thought.

The prolegomenon does not follow a critical method, nor a synthetic method, in contextualizing Dewart's works. Rather my aim is to deepen readers consciousness on particular points of overlap between the Council Fathers and Dewart's evaluation of the same philosophical or theological

[4] *Vitality* 6.
[5] My italics, *Encyclopedia* 970.

concerns the church had in the modern world. What began as the "missionary" self-consciousness, of the Council as it evaluated its presence in the modern world, has evolved into an historical and philosophical self-consciousness. This latter is the the main focus of the prolegomenon. The intellectual impact that the spirit of renewal had upon the new academic insights promulgated at Vatican II places Dewart's philosophy in the category of the existential philosophical and theological thinking characteristic of the 21st century. Marie Joseph le Guillou, a peritus at Vatican II, wrote:

> Though becoming more conscious of itself in its missionary function, the Church has realized that it must proclaim salvation to a human race which is real, personal, social and historical reality reborn every generation, and to a world which is in process of being completely transformed – and also that it has much to learn from mankind. [6]

Learning from mankind is a very posthuman notion. To that end I examine key passages from the Conciliar documents in light of philosophical Dewart's perspective. I have kept commentary from other authoritative sources to a minimum so as to allow the similarities (and differences) between the Council's collective perspective and Dewart's personal creative insights to appear as unfiltered as possible in the reader's consciousness.

Human consciousness is foundational to philosophy, theology and the modern sciences. Consciousness is a more inclusive concept than the traditional concept of reason. Human consciousness possesses an assertive ability on the part of the individual, whereas traditional reasoning is ultimately a passive undertaking on the part of an individual. That is, humans can acquiesce passively to reason by consciously organizing and reorganizing the sense data they receive as thinking agents until convinced of reason's logic. However, an assertive consciousness involves an *eisegesis,* that is, the attribution of an insight not necessarily contained in an *exegesis.* Thus, this prolegomenon is intended as an eisegesis, not an exegesis of Leslie Dewart's philosophy of mind, reading into it a posthuman perspective.

To illustrate the point that Leslie Dewart's philosophical view is not retrograde, he has coined the term "meta-metaphysical" to draw attention to the future foundations of Christian belief. Again, I

[6] *Encyclopedia* 219.

suggest the term "meta-metaphysical" is a ultimately posthuman notion, not a classical one. Whether he has actually accomplished his philosophical task, the reader will need to decide. Dewart wrote.

> I should also preface my work with a caution about the term *meta-metaphysical*, which I have coined with reference to the mode of philosophical thought which alone can, in my opinion, effectively *restore the foundations of Christian belief* today. I wish to call attention to the adjectival form which I usually give to it. It would be a thorough misunderstanding of my intent if I were attributed the suggestion that there is a distinctive philosophical discipline, or a division or 'branch' of philosophy called meta-metaphysics — least of all one which would share with other philosophical divisions like logic, ethics and metaphysics, the totality of philosophical science. I have not in this book suggested this. What I have suggested is that philosophy today must give itself a meta-metaphysical *orientation*. I have suggested that philosophy should *transcend* its metaphysical stage of development and, thus, initiate its meta-metaphysical age. I have even suggested, in a sense, that philosophy develop, as it were a meta-metaphysical metaphysics. I have above all suggested that Christian philosophical thought in particular should become meta-metaphysical thought. These suggestions may be worthwhile or they may not. They are, at any rate the suggestions that I have actually made. [7]

Throughout all his works, Leslie Dewart engaged philosophical thought primarily in its Catholic expression as to what shape it would take in the future. His philosophical speculations coincided with the modern phenomenon of the spirit of renewal that motivated the Roman Catholic Church to constitute itself anew at Vatican II. Propelled by the energizing spirit of renewal, the Council Fathers looked at re-constituting the Church given the experience of the faithful in the modern world. The Church was considered by the Council primarily *vis-à-vis* the non-classical world with the presumption that little self-reflection and self-criticism of its inherited philosophical perspective needed to be undertaken. However, the spirit of renewal was also operative in the minds of Catholic philosophers who did not attend the Council. Such philosophers focused on an

[7] My italics, *Foundations* 18.

interior renewal of the Church's self-understanding, as opposed to an external renewal of a corporate structure. Robert Caponigri has observed that in the 1960's, Catholic philosophical thought was becoming

> engaged not primarily in a dialogue with the world, but in an interior dialogue, seeking to achieve a more nearly complete realization of its own being and character, rather than to offer a more adequate image to the world, in the realization that only to the degree to which it possesses itself interiorly in idea and in affect that the image it creates before the world can be authentic. [8]

Although influenced by the same spirit of renewal the Council was looking outward to its own image, while other Catholic philosophers, influenced by the same spirit of renewal, were looking inward to an authentic spiritual renewal.

This difference in focus accounts for the fact that Leslie Dewart is not normally recognized as a philosopher whose thinking is in line with the spirit of institutional renewal envisioned by Vatican II. History illustrates the plurality of Catholic philosophical thought developing prior to the Council (Dewart's thought is a case in point). The Church's diversity was subsequently reflected in the four constitutions of the Roman Catholic Church promulgated from a sociological and political perspective. Caponigri noted, in light of the the Church's antecedent constitutional understanding, that the word "constitution" now meant

> the set of structural, dynamic, etc. conditions under which the Church achieves actual existence in all of the dimensions that are implicit in her nature within the context of history. [9]

Hence, the academic need for a prolegomenon to Dewart's Catholic philosophical theology as expressed by a philosopher who was influenced by the same spirit of renewal that motivated the Council Fathers.

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[8] *Modern* xiii. However, Caponigri's thought is not original, but it echoes that of M. D. Petre. "For what, after all, can be worse for the cause of religion to ignore or despise the distinction between the religious and the non-religious? and what can be, at last, more fatal to the Church, which properly exists in the interests of religion alone, than to thus under-estimate her own true cause?" (*Modernism* 173).

[9] *Modern* xi.

In this short book I investigate that phenomenon to some degree. I do this by comparing and contrasting various doctrinal passages from the Conciliar documents to Leslie Dewart's philosophical and religious published insights. For access to Conciliar documents, I have relied solely on the texts themselves as they appear in Flannery's translation, avoiding any additional commentary or further explanation or opinions on the Council's intention. My purpose is to show that the same spirit of renewal that inspired the ecclesial thinking of Vatican II has influenced the Catholic thought of Dewart who has taken his thinking one evolutionary and speculative step beyond the Council. That is to say to a posthuman type of inquiry.

While familiarizing myself with the mind of the Council, it became apparent to me that the primary purpose of renewal was to establish an ecclesial order in light of the advancements of modern science. It now seems that no vision of renewal of the spirituality of the faithful themselves was contemplated by the Fathers of the Council. Nor was any philosophical renewal anticipated. Rather, the faithful were presumed to be somehow integrated into the hierarchical order of the Church. And any advancement concerning spiritual renewal of the faithful and philosophical reassessment was left to the informal discussions of theologians and philosophers outside the framework of the Council. Conciliar renewal became, in fact, a corporate political undertaking with the unintended effects of a spiritual renewal among the faithful. Robert Adolfs states this explicitly.

> Essentially, the Council was little more than a professional discussion between administrators of the Church, but popular imagination turned it into a spiritual rebirth of the Church. [10]

In the spirit of personal renewal, Dewart deliberately reached out to others through his philosophical theology with the desire to improve upon his generation's philosophical perspective of the Catholic faith. His collected writings are only a first word of such personal renewal. He expressed his thought in this way.

> It is not out of the question that in the future there should be other attempts, besides mine, to understand the historical causes of the failure of modern philosophy, and to attempt to remedy them. And if such attempts reach the

[10] *Grave* 9.

> correct conclusions that may have escaped me, they should yield more adequate proposals than mine. [11]

One of Dewart's insights within the early climate of spiritual renewal was the dehellenization of philosophical thought. There is little evidence that this topic was a major concern for the Council Fathers whose attention was more focused on renewal of cultural and societal matters. Dehellenization is the philosophical process intended to remove the influence of ancient Greek ideas within modern thought. Dehellenization is, in fact, an approach within the posthuman philosophical context, to free Western intellectual activity from its classical inheritance. While not erroneous in itself, the Hellenization of doctrine and dogma has proven to be inadequate given the experience of 20th and 21st century Western humanity. Modern spirituality of the Western variety can no longer satisfactorily rely on outdated philosophical concepts, according to Dewart, given his perspective of philosophical renewal. Whether in institutional renewal or in personal renewal the future is indeterminant and has yet to be created.

By the 19th Century, the church in its Catholic and Protestant forms had evolved to become considerably different from all previous generations. The church after the 19th Century needed to address the problems of a new generation of the faithful, in order that that generation did not leave the church since the ecclesiastical institution had become irrelevant to their needs. A renewed ecclesial understanding was required for the political expression of the church, plus a new perspective concerning the faithful was required to address the self-understanding introduced by the modern scientific and novel philosophical interpretations of what it meant to be human. The latter did not take up much of the Council's attention and it was accepted that the traditional understanding of humanity's relationship with God, and Western humanity's spirituality, were satisfactory and could be left to be addressed by the theologians outside the Council.

The theological understanding of society and culture put forward by Vatican II continues to evolve. In hindsight, one may observe the development, as well as the lack of development, in the theological, pastoral, sociological, and psychological insights discussed in the Council's four sessions. In this essay, it should become clear that the Council gave minimal recognition to the personal philosophical and spiritual advancements that had been evolving within Western religious

[11] *Challenge* 464.

thought of the 19th Century. The Council elected to concentrate on the corporate and constitutional self-understanding of the Church that it thought immediately necessary in the 20th Century. Clearly, the Council Fathers did not have in mind the experience of Charles Davis, who stated in his book, *A Question of Conscience* concerning the Roman Church:

> My objection has been directed against that Church as a social structure, because it is as a visible social entity that the Roman Church makes its claim. [12]

He concludes his critique by noting that:

> The evidence, I have argued, points to the conclusion that it is an obsolete structure no longer appropriate to the contemporary situation and therefore now a considerable obstacle to Christian life and mission. [13]

But the visible social entity, the modern ecclesiastical corporation, is but the symptom of the true reason for the irrelevancy of the Church, Davis maintains. The true cause of irrelevancy is the breakdown of hierarchical authority.

> The hierarchical teaching authority has become increasingly irrelevant in the life of the Church, and the hierarchical system has already to a great extent broken down. … The same may be said of the documents of the second Vatican Council, which unlike those of previous Councils, including Trent, did not add, but only cut back the understanding already achieved. [14]

In short, for Davis Vatican II is a retrograde step in the history of the Church. Although, concluding on a somewhat negative note, Davis still has written within the spirit of renewal that has animated the Second Vatican Council. After outlining his personal struggles with the Church, he turned his attention to the future prospects for the Church as it would need to fashion itself for the 21st century and beyond.

> Underlying all recent questioning about the social structure of the Christian Church is the long-delayed acknowledgement of the disappearance of Christendom. Christians at last are now accepting the emergence of the secular West as irreversible and the consequent need to understand and

[12] *Question* 118.
[13] Ibid. 124.
[14] Ibid. 218.

> structure the new relation between the Church and the world. Many deep questions are involved. They can be summed up in this way: What is the relation between the purpose or mission of the Church and the movement of secular history? How should the Christian community be structured as distinct from the inclusive society, whether considered as the nation or as the general community of mankind? [15]

In support of his view, Davis had quoted Pope John XXIII at the First Session of the Council:

> The salient point of this Council is not, therefore, a discussion of one article or another of the fundamental doctrine of the Church which has repeatedly been taught by the Fathers and by ancient and modern theologians, and which is presumed to be well known and familiar to all. For this a Council was not necessary. But from the renewed, serene, and tranquil adherence to all the teaching of the Church in its entirely and preciseness, as it still shines forth in the Acts of the Council of Trent and First Vatican Council, the Christian, Catholic, and apostolic spirit of the whole world expects a step towards a doctrinal penetration and a formation of consciousness in faithful and perfect conformity to the authentic doctrine, which, however, should be studied and expounded through the literary forms of modern thought. The substance of the ancient doctrine of the faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another. And it is the latter that must be taken into great consideration with patience if necessary, everything being measured in the forms and proportions of a magisterium which is predominately pastoral in character. [16]

What had been conceived as a "theological" renewal was undertaken as a "sociological" renewal by the Council Fathers. "The substance of the ancient doctrine of the faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another," is clearly compatible with a posthuman philosophical

[15] *Question* 182.
[16] Ibid. 72.

perspective. In other words, the Papal thinking of that era of spiritual renewal anticipated Mahon's contemporary understanding of "concrete posthumanism."

> Concrete posthumanism is simply an encounter with contemporary reality that takes the question of where that reality points us to seriously; and, as I have been arguing, it is better to fact that reality with eyes open and critical faculties fully engaged. [17]

Historically, early Church Councils had been called by the Roman Emperors to define new doctrines. Rather than define new doctrines, however, Vatican II was called to bring the Church up to date in pastoral matters. Such updating or *aggiornamento* was encouraged in theology and philosophy by the Council and many Catholic Universities throughout the world undertook the challenge in a spirit of service to the Church. On an individual basis, however, a large number of philosophers and theologians, thinking independently, but not necessarily in an adversarial manner towards the Church, favoured a return to the sources of doctrine and dogma and opted to investigate the Council's spirit of renewal through a *ressourcement.* Leslie Dewart and Gregory Baum are prime examples of thinkers desiring to return to the sources of their respective disciplines. [18]

In the following chapters, I cite the pertinent texts of the Conciliar documents and identify passages of Leslie Dewart's work that reflected a parallel spirit of renewal to the Catholic Church. My investigation is from the point of view of philosophy, not of a corporate structure of a political nature. I hope to illustrate Dewart's views as displaying the spirit of renewal as envisioned by the Council.

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[17] *Posthumanism* 253.

[18] Dewart was a philosopher, whereas Baum was a sociologist who became interested in the newly emerging ecumenical movement in the 1950's. Later Baum was appointed a member of the newly formed Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity by Pope John XXIII in preparation for the up-coming Vatican Council. Offering a personal sociological evaluation he commented: "Vatican II released a great amount of energy in the Catholic Church, setting Catholics free to explore the new friendship with other Christians and learn from traditions they had long neglected. But while this sort of conversation has come to determine the style of theological reflection at most seminaries and universities, the organized ecumenical movement has become so dominated by institutional interests that its power has been greatly reduced. It is hardly a movement anymore. The Churches officially represented in the "committee ecumenism" often prevent the really embarrassing questions from being raised. It often appears as if the Churches come together to guarantee one another their inherited structures and vested interests" (*Journeys* 10).

§

Gaudium et Spes

Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (7 December, 1965).

Paragraph 4.

> "In probing the recesses of their own minds, people often seem more uncertain than ever of themselves: in the gradual and precise unfolding of the laws of social living, they are uncertain about how to plot its course."

Here the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* narrows the discussion to the "laws of social living." As I noted above the issues concerning the spirit of renewal include matters concerning philosophy and the spiritual life of the faithful. Shortly after World War II, many professionals put a great deal of faith in the certainty and the necessity of global social improvement that modern science was able to supply to the temporal life. Plotting a successful course for the future of humanity was envisioned as a realizable goal given the rapid advances of science and technology in the West. However, as early as 1954 in his studies of Karl Pearson's scientific philosophy, Leslie Dewart realized that one of Pearson's insights would play a significant role in his own personal philosophical development. That is, modern science does not demonstrate "necessity" in events. Upon reflection, worldly events could have been otherwise than they were. Without necessity to determine them the laws of social living are open ended and susceptible to change. In his PhD thesis, Dewart wrote:

> Science for the past is a description, for the future a belief; it is not, and has never been an explanation, if by this word is meant that science shows the necessity of any sequence of perceptions. [19]

Social renewal, then, reflecting the spirit of the times is a belief in a better future that will not be governed by a divine power which was the explanation given within a sacred hierarchical society. Such divine power is no longer in control of an unfolding of the cosmos. Control of social renewal

[19] *Development* 72.

has passed from divinity to humanity with a corresponding rise in humanity's anxiety level. The modern philosopher as a wise person will also be a spiritual person whose interests are individual as well as collective in the broadest sense of the term. Dewart has kept that perspective in view as he wrote his first book, *Christianity and Religion*. In plotting a course of social living Dewart had anticipated some of the observations of Vatican II. After earning a PhD, it soon became apparent that Dewart's career of writing about philosophical theology charted a new course in the realization of contemporary social living for 21st century Western humanity. As I hope to show he continued his writing in light of the spirit of renewal of the Council.

In *Christianity and Revolution*, Dewart selected the theme of politics as influencing the laws of social living. In the Prologue to the book his opening sentence is: "This is an essay in political philosophy." He does not mean simply secular politics but an amalgamation of both ecclesiastical and civil politics. Later, by way of clarification, he wrote:

> What we need to ask ourselves is what was the nature of the Cuban Church's implicit ecclesiology, particularly in what concerns the sanctity of the Church; whether that ecclesiology is the only possible one within orthodoxy; whether it is adequate; and, finally whether we wish to share it or not. [20]

He clearly had in mind that ecclesiastical politics were necessary for proper social living, but in the case of Cuba, ecclesiastical politics had failed miserably and political uncertainty prevailed. He commented.

> To the same degree that it [the Church] mistook itself, it also misunderstood the nature of the sociopolitical events around it: It failed to see that the problem was not simply one of communism but of the beginning of Cuba's emergence from medieval life, with all the painful dislocations due to the process of rapid, violent, overdue, historical change. [21]

In light of the spirit of the times, it is legitimate to conclude today that one's personal spirituality suffers from "dislocations" due to historical change. The foundations of the cultural norms of government inherited from the Greco-Roman world were no longer adequate to support the

[20] *Christianity* 180.
[21] Ibid. 181.

modern spiritual insights into Cuban Christianity. New norms of governance suited to the spirit of the times were needed.

The uncertainty and anxiety of modern Western humanity had also been identified by Dewart in his *Future of Belief.* However, the identification within a spiritual context reached beyond the temporal political situation. He wrote:

> But the deeper question concerns an issue at once more fundamental and more comprehensive, namely, the meaningfulness of Christian belief for the experience and self-understanding of man in a modern, industrial, technological society. If we put it this way, the question looms considerably larger. For the experience and the self-concept of modern man do not merely fail to accord with institutional Christianity: they appear to conflict with Christianity's most basic doctrines and, in the first place, with belief in God. [22]

This is so for modern humanity because it is a scientific consciousness of a culture that defines a human being, not the abstract philosophical consciousness that envisions humanity as a rational animal conceived within medieval Western philosophy. Which in turn gave rise, as the paragraph of *Gaudium et Spes* has noted, to an uneasy future because classical culture based on the scholastic notion of humanism has perpetuated itself beyond the needs of contemporary society. Mahon has noted in introducing the concept of posthumanism that:

> I'm also not sure that it's a case of something being 'wrong' with humanism, but instead a recognition that humanism may no longer be the best way to think about how our species understands its position in the twenty-first century. [23]

It seems to me, upon careful reading of Dewart's works that he may be more optimistic than the Council Fathers themselves, when the faithful probe the recesses of their own minds to develop a new understanding of theism.

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[22] *Future* 16. This, in fact, has been Gregory Baum's experience. After reevaluating his own theological position, he wrote: "Eventually the very doctrine of God would have to be rethought, for if the divine mystery is present in man's discovery of herself as situated in the human world, and is operative in man's ongoing creation of her future, then God is not extrinsic to human life but the gracious presupposition of man's humanity and hence in no way, however, qualified, a possible object of the human mind" (*Journeys* 23).
[23] *Posthumanism* 2.

> All history, but very specially perhaps Christian history, is freely and spontaneously made by the creative forces generated by man's interrelations with the ultimate reality, God. For this reason history is radically unforeseeable. Nevertheless, what is radically unforeseeable may well be empirically predictable: though we may not say what final goal we are bound to arrive at, we can determine in which direction we are already going. We can forecast what points we are likely to traverse, on the basis of the decisions we have already taken and on the assumption that we will follow them through. [24]

The end result being that as Christian theism evolves it may lead to the understanding that contemporary spirituality no longer means God's ascendency over humanity, nor humanity's submission to God, as classically understood. This realization is itself, a sign of the times that perhaps the Council did not fully appreciate from its sociological perspective.

The insights that Dewart shares in *The Foundations of Belief* were presented as a course of formal lectures to the Graduate Faculty of Theology at St Michael's College, University of Toronto in 1968. This book is a specialized study reaching into the recesses of the consciousness of theologians. Dewart undertook a phenomenological method of interpretation as suggested by Jacques Maritain who believed that this method had changed everything in theological interpretation. However, Dewart noted that this method

> has not quite changed 'everything.' This book is substantially concerned with determining what, in the order of Christian belief, has been changed by the phenomenological method and what has *not yet* been changed by it. [25]

With regard to uncertainty in plotting a course of social living as acknowledged by the Council, Dewart has observed that

> the project of developing Christian belief cannot rest either (a) on the traditional philosophical foundations, or (b) on those provided by contemporary thought, as they presently stand. [26]

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[24] *Future* 171.
[25] Dewart's italics, *Foundations* 35, n. 8.
[26] *Foundations* 47.

Some sort of a philosophical revision is demanded by the spirit of renewal proper to our modern age. Such revision is most evident in the field of communications. Richard Rodriguez made a pertinent observation.

> We like to say that the invention of the internal combustion engine changed us, changed the way live. In truth, we built the Model T Ford because we had changed; we wanted to remake the world to accommodate our restlessness. We might now say: Newspapers will be lost because technology will force us to acquire information in new ways. [27]

Anyone familiar with the advent of the internet and techno-digital scientific thinking will appreciate the prophetic dimension of Rodriguez's comment.

In probing the recesses of their own minds, contemporary individuals have overlooked the inadequacy of classical philosophy, according to Dewart. This will inevitably lead to an uncertain future. In *Hume's Challenge and the Renewal of Modern Philosophy*, he writes that

> projecting onto the nature of the mind our deficient exercise of our mental abilities is not a procedure in which we can reasonably place any confidence. But more conclusive considerations than mere prudence support the view that the current condition of philosophy poses a true and real metaproblem — a philosophical problem about the causes of the chronic failure of philosophy to solve the problem of the mind. [28]

The ability for humans to look into their minds is a problem of self-consciousness for any philosopher. With the realization of a limited capacity for inquiry, humans have entered upon an uncharted future of self-discovery both with respect to forming their society and deepening their spirituality. For those entering into the uncharted future, especially with use of the Internet, Mahon has issued a caveat. He speaks of the kind of reporting often seen on the Internet as "clickbait" which should be viewed with a critical eye. [29]

[27] *Darling* 175.
[28] *Challenge* 29.
[29] *Posthumanism* 27

With respect to an uncertain course in Christian living, Dewart proposed his own explanation for this uncertainty. He made the observation that

> some philosophers seem to think that they disbelieve in God, when in truth they disbelieve in the religious trappings in which the concept has come down to us, but have no objection to the infinite, omnipotent, and eternal power and truth that are the substance of our traditional religious belief in God. [30]

Clearly this can be seen as a reference to John XXIII's perspective as quoted on page 14 above. "The substance of the ancient doctrine of the faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another." Modern science, by retaining the insights and language of antiquity, has in fact ironically imported and applied the old notions of infinity, omnipotence, and power into the new and modern experience of the cosmos without realizing that it has done so. God's "function" has been retained within the scientific mind-set, but not God's description.

Para. 4 (continued).

> "There is lastly a painstaking search for a better material world, without a parallel spiritual advancement."

This is an interesting admission by the Council amid its concern for the temporal and social constitution of the social order. It illustrates that the Council was aware of the enduring relationship between the physical and metaphysical in human affairs. But this relationship is asymmetrical, and in some cases personal spirituality is reduced to the point of being negligible in matters of scientific advancement. A lack of spirituality was the issue in Pearson's philosophical statistical framework according to Dewart. In fact, Dewart will query the lack of a "spiritual advancement" concerning Pearson's quest for a "creed of life" containing the certainty of statistics. He comments concerning Pearson's spiritual dilemma:

> For a great deal was at stake and Pearson's philosophy of statistical induction was his answer to what essentially was a religious problem. [31]

[30] *Challenge* 257.
[31] *Development* 28.

Earlier systems than Pearson's scientific proposal, which were designed taking into account philosophical wisdom as part of the solution, were partially successful Dewart maintains.

> Yet, the wisdom of these systems has long been neglected: the preoccupation of philosophers with epistemological problems has obscured the nature of the main problem of philosophy, which is an ethical one. [32]

Historically, in striving for a better material world, ethical matters have taken precedence over political reconstruction. One contemporary exception to this fact is Michael Ignatieff's, *The Rights Revolution* in which he suggests that the world's fundamental problem is political.

> The world's deepest problem is not climate change or the supposed clash of civilizations or inequality between rich nations and poor ones — as important as these problems are. The fundamental problem facing humanity is political: how to create stable political order among people of different religions, cultures, and economic classes. As long as states can cohere as viable political communities, all their problems can be managed. [33]

Ignatieff's view is clearly a secular view. Yet, in keeping with the spirit of the times he simply replaced the ancient wisdom of Western philosophy with contemporary politics which lack any sense of spiritual development. This is a perspective Dewart has not adopted.

In footnote number 123 of his PhD thesis (1954) *The Development of Karl Pearson's Scientific Philosophy*, Dewart observed that

> philosophy unlike religion is not usually institutionalized and integrated with the social structure of its world, but remains more personal and its effects are felt only through cultural activities. [34]

Further, he concludes in footnote 277:

> Thus, Pearson's ethics may justly be said to be an ethics of evolution. Survival value, however, is not to be understood as having a purely biological meaning. Rather, in it lies as well the 'spiritual' development and evolution of man. [35]

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[32] *Development* 37.
[33] *Rights* viii.
[34] *Development* 105.
[35] Ibid. 113.

In the context of spiritual advancement, understood in the sense of Vatican II, Dewart will expand and clarify his comments with respect to biology and spirituality in *Evolution and Consciousness* which be published in 1989.

Dewart will conclude his thesis, the observations of *Gaudium et Spes* notwithstanding, that Pearson, unlike Ignatieff in his political philosophy, did attempt a spiritual advancement in his statistical scientific philosophy. He writes in the Conclusion that

> if the account presented in the forgoing chapters, an account of the nature and development of Pearson's philosophy and its culmination in the concept of scientific inference as statistical is at all accurate then it could not be entirely wrong to say that Pearson's philosophy is essentially a religious one. And if the term religion seems too loaded with impressions and varying connotations, let us say then that Pearson's philosophy is essentially an ethical one. It makes no difference: at bottom true religion and ethics are one for Pearson. [36]

In *Christianity and Revolution*, Dewart reflects on the contemporary experience of the Catholic missionary attitude. From his perspective the original "great commission" [37] seems to have lost its ability to convince.

> What must be feared is not so much that the gentiles shall reject the Church bodily as that the Church may not spiritually conquer the gentiles. [38]

And he further concludes that we are reaching an end of a spiritual stage, but not the end of spirituality. Evolution is not merely a physical biological phenomenon for Dewart, but also an intellectual phenomenon subject to the evolutionary process akin to politics.

> Spiritually as well as politically, we cannot any longer avoid ruling ourselves reasonably, humanistically, and autonomously. [39]

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[36] *Development* 89.
[37] Matthew 28:19
[38] *Christianity* 185.
[39] Ibid. 283.

Clearly Dewart has taken evolution to any understanding beyond any theory proposed by Darwin who said:

> But believe in Natural Selection, not because I can prove in any single case that it has changed one species into another, but because it groups and explains well (as it seems to me) a host of facts in classification, embryology, morphology, rudimentary organs, geological succession and distribution. [40]

The advancement in the understanding of modern spirituality is evaluated critically by Dewart in his *Future of Belief* in terms of "dehellenization." He describes this advancement as a functional stage in Western philosophical thinking. Dehellenization is a negative word that designates a positive value.

> Nonetheless, on the basis, not of what it might positively look like in the future, but of what its positive function at present already suggests, dehellenization may well be described, without a negative reference to the past, as the conscious historical self-fashioning of the cultural form which Christianity requires *now* for the sake of its *future.* In other words, dehellenization means, in positive terms, the conscious creation of the future of belief. [41]

Any development of an advanced understanding of spirituality would result in a corresponding development in theology, according to Dewart. In *Future of Belief,* he notes:

> Insofar as Catholic theology today needs philosophy it needs a philosophy that would not preclude *creative* development. It cannot be served well by a philosophy that permits no more than the eduction of act from potency. Creative Catholic theology has therefore increasingly turned to non-Scholastic (which means almost exclusively non-Catholic, indeed, non-Christian) philosophical thought. One can only hope that this unfortunate state of affairs will not continue indefinitely. [42]

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[40] Quoted in Parsons, T., Shils, E., Naegele, K., and Pitts, J., (eds). *Theories of Society: Foundations of Modern Sociological Theory* (2 vols.) Free Press of Glencoe, 1961, Vol 1, p. xxi.
[41] Dewart's italics *Future* 50.
[42] Dewart's italics Ibid. 153.

While the Church's turn to non-Catholic religious experience has been acknowledged by Dewart, he remained primarily concerned with the Catholic ethos of theological thinking expressed philosophically. This continues to be the case as he moved from a classical philosophical position to a phenomenological philosophical position. Significantly, Diane Kaczmarek noted that Dewart has creatively related philosophy and theology and thus avoided employing non-Christian thought to justify his religious perspective.

> Most importantly, Dewart uniquely assimilates and synthesizes much modern material, and the synthesis represents a philosophical and theological advance which is his methodological conclusion. [43]

The Conciliar spirit of renewal did not arise within a vacuum. Among the main antecedent causes within the Church was the Modernist movement. Particular to Catholic Christianity, it also had its Anglican representatives and other religious thinkers. According to M. D. Petre, collectively these theologians constituted no intentionally organized group adhering to a Credo or formal programme in theology. [44] But they heralded the age in which the Church would engage in a spirit of renewal yet only if temporary. She observed:

> There had been, at the end of the last century, a refreshing outbreak of religious activity amongst young Catholic laymen in France and Italy. Some had devoted themselves to intellectual, others to social enterprises. Amongst the former, some had founded newspapers and magazines, of avowedly Catholic as well as scientific character, most of them unexceptionable in their tone towards authority; the latter class devoted itself to the religious as well as the material betterment of the condition of the working classes, in a spirit of democratic sympathy. All these efforts were doomed to extinction, the former because they sought room in the Church for modern thought, the latter because they asked a place for the modern democracy. [45]

I dare suggest that for Dewart a "better material world" means, correspondingly, a better world for the understanding of religion. That is, for a better insight into spirituality and its expression through

[43] "The Theological Methodology of Leslie Dewart" (1971). Master's Thesis. https://epublications.marquette.edu/essays
[44] Cf. *Modernism* 172.
[45] Ibid. 169.

the cultural evolution of religion. Such is his response to the observation of a lack of "parallel spiritual development" made by the Council. He meticulously states his more intellectually developed view in *Foundations of Belief.* After deciding to address religious thought through philosophical interpretation. He writes:

> The history of philosophy is not the history, as the *Greeks* might have said, of one damned philosophical thing after another — it is the history of the progress of human thought. And the achievement of every stage of progress is, by definition, the achievement of that which had not been achieved before. [46]

The history of Western thought has renewed itself from the simple imaginative beings of folklore and fables, through to various stages of poetic expression, and to the classical philosophical distinction between physics and metaphysics, ultimately leading to the novelty of techno-digital science. Western thought is presently on the threshold of a new evolutionary stage of a meta-metaphysical orientation, according to Dewart. I take it one step further and suggest that Western thought is on a new evolutionary stage to posthuman thought.

Dewart offers an interesting perspective on the lack of spiritual development in the modern world. In his characteristic way of inverting ordinary thought, Dewart suggests that the lack of spiritual development has actually come about because of the irrelevance to any spiritual aspect to the self-understanding of contemporary humanity. In short, humanity is not a spiritual being in need of God, but humanity is simply a scientific curiosity who has made its appearance within the cosmos. He writes in *Hume's Challenge and the Renewal of Modern Philosophy* that

> the inherent reality of the world took away thus the rationality of every possible attempt to demonstrate a transcendent order of reality. *Nothing* in the world can be seen as a demonstration of God's work. For every attempt, if it appeals to reason, must reach it conclusions on the basis of premises regarding what we know about the world and ourselves — whose reality inheres in ourselves. Thus, awareness of the reality of the world and of ourselves reveals the utterly imaginary nature of every supposed

[46] Dewart's italics *Foundations* 358.

> transcendent reality; it shows up the self-contradiction of the concept of a 'real-world-that-is-less-than-the-real-world.' Believers have therefore had to fall back on the admissibility of paradox as a valid form of reasoning, in order to argue, for instance, that the divine 'existence' is 'analogous' (i.e., proportional) to earthly existence, though we cannot know the nature of the proportion. In sum, the existential interpretation does not of itself argue against the existence of God, but rendered him irrelevant to the existing world and made possible thus the 'secularity' of the modern world. [47]

Dewart will conclude, however, that the lack of spirituality is not due to a scientific understanding alone. But, also, of "the inability of modern philosophy to deal adequately with the mind." [48] In Dewart's philosophical perspective, of course, the inabilities of modern philosophy are "spiritual inabilities." From a theological perspective, then, this means that Christianity had little to say about the human existential condition as viewed apart from and independently from God. As a means to obtain knowledge about the world and ourselves, a Godless Christianity is of minimal significance. What seems to be "gone," or at least minimized from the perspective of the Council, is the appreciation of individual spirituality in the world. But Dewart reminds us from his philosophical perspective of the the inaccuracy of that view. God is still present to human experience in some manner. Dewart noted:

> But the obviousness of the existence of God and his providence is gone. What is not gone is God. [49]

Para. 7.

> "In the past it was the exception to repudiate God and religion to the point of abandoning them, and then only in individual cases; but nowadays it seems a matter of progress to reject them as incompatible with scientific progress and a new kind of humanism. In many places it is not only in philosophical terms that such trends are expressed, there are signs of them in literature, art, the humanities, the

[47] Dewart's italics *Challenge* 67.
[48] *Challenge* 103.
[49] Ibid. 200.

> interpretation of history and even civil law: all of which is very disturbing to many people."

Dewart has an interesting perspective on the tension between modern science and religion with respect to the repudiation of God as to which of the two might be at fault. He questions the assumption that humanity's understanding of modern science is correct. Science is identified with progress but can this remain a sustainable attitude? In his thesis on Pearson, Dewart makes the observation that

> it may well be part of the problem lies in an incorrect grasp of the meaning of science, and if so, science must itself become aware of its toxic nature before it can be reconciled with religion. [50]

Science has done nothing to counter the toxic nature it has created. It is also here in his thesis that Dewart makes the insightful observation that philosophy, unlike religion, is usually not institutionally based on, nor allied with, nor restricted to any social structure. Yet philosophical insights in their own right can be very disturbing to many people, as the Council Fathers admit, and especially to established authority.

The sense of a self-critical history is often missing in Council documents. However, the Council Fathers did undertake a successful evaluation of the external contemporary world in which the Church was living. It would have been to the Church's advantage to factor in an internal self-critical political assessment as well. Dewart, employed an internal approach in his *Christianity and Revolution: The Lesson of Cuba.* However, the lesson he speaks of here is framed by the cultural context of the past. Modern science had not yet become the foe of inherited religion in the minds of the Cubans. Rather, atheistic communism and revolution each served as the *bête noire* in the eyes of the Roman Church and its established social order. The Cuban Church, according to Dewart, was an example of what happened as a society emerged from its imperial and colonial past. He introduced his perspective thus:

> Much of the world's understanding of the Cuban revolution has suffered from a general absence of historical perspective and from insufficient knowledge of Cuba's historical background. This is especially true with

[50] *Development* 16.

> regard to the conditions of the Church in Cuba before the revolution. Though many have recently discovered that indifference to the institutions of religion is the norm among Cubans who are Catholic by inertia and custom, deeply devout in an instinctive way, and in communion with the Church only through the desiccated umbilical cord of cultural tradition, we are not as likely to know that the profound alienation between people and the the clergy … began well over a century ago. [51]

Social self-critical reflection of the established Church had yet to begin from Dewart's perspective. However, in an optimistic remark he commented on the attitude the the faithful which they ought to adopt towards communism, and by extension, towards social evolution.

> If communism is wrong, then precisely because it is such, what we should do to it is not destroy it, but do what it cannot do for itself, namely, make it find its proper perfection and its proper truth. [52]

What Dewart realized with respect to the Cuban situation, Dickinson had realized earlier about ancient Greek culture. That is, whatever "is" can be improved upon without needing to be destroyed and reconstructed anew. In life, generally, evolution is to be preferred to revolution. It is sufficient that a spirit of renewal, religious or otherwise, be given a chance to operate in favour of advancement. Dickinson writes of the ancient Hellenists that

> the conceptions which inspired their highest aims were already embodied in their institutions and reflected in their life; and the realization of what ought to be involved not the destruction of what was, but merely its perfecting on its own lines; … an effort to realize explicitly that type of Good which was already implicitly embodied in its structure. [53]

It is a scientific culture that defines contemporary humanity to a great extent Dewart notes. Further, he maintains, scientific culture is the only culture that has given rise to atheism within a higher religious movement, in particular Christianity.

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[51] *Christianity* 92.
[52] Ibid. 217.
[53] *Greek* 252.

> Christianity enjoys the doubtful distinction of being the only higher religion to have become preoccupied with the existence of God to the extent of having neglected his reality. That it so neglected it is the true meaning of the defection of the working class, the secularization of the culture and the apostacy of science, and it is evident from the history of the Church's attitude to social, political and scientific questions. Christianity indeed is the only religion to have generated atheism within itself. [54]

Atheism is a type of repudiation of God that fits the Council's perspective. Only obliquely does the Council admit as much, but little follow-up is subsequently undertaken to correct the situation on the part of the faithful themselves. Their behaviour may be understood as contributing to the atheistic attitude in modern society as noted in *Gaudium et Spes*.

> Without doubt those who willfully try to drive God from their heart and to avoid all questions about religion, not following the dictates of their conscience, are not free from blame. But believers themselves often share some responsibility for this situation. … Believers can thus have more than a little to do with the rise of atheism. [55]

There is an understandable reason for the rejection of God and religion by some of the faithful, Dewart maintains. It is a matter of the strict control of philosophical thought by the Church. Science, as a discipline, was never under the control of ecclesiastical authorities as was "dogmatic" philosophy from Medieval times.

> Whatever the human mind should or should not do, the contemporary experience includes *respect* for science — largely *because* of science's diffidence and its readiness to change its mind — whereas contemporary man's enthusiasm for the self-assurance of much Catholic philosophical thinking is under much stricter control. [56]

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[54] *Future* 71.

[55] *Vatican* 181. It is interesting to note that atheism, nor divinity, as topics are not mentioned in Peter Mahon's introductory book to posthumanism. However, another noted scholar, Francesca Ferrando has posted two videos on YouTube in which she discusses "The Divine" from a posthuman perspective. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2o1cVI3Jz0)

[56] Dewart's italics *Future* 12. But not all theologians view such control in a negative way. The Protestant philosopher/theologian, George Grant envisions such oversight as positive. "None of our traditional theologies seem to me able to provide an adequate account of what it is to think in an absolute morality" (*Philosophy* 95). Further, in a footnote he says: "In making such a statement, I must, of course, emphasize that the Roman Catholic Church is in a different position from that of any other ecclesiastical body, because of its systematic encouragement of

Such control explains the mind of the Council for rejecting Marxist thought. In addition to its political usefulness Marxist thought presented a new kind of humanitarianism whereby "humanity rather than God or Nature is the Great Being worthy of worship." [57] And as such it is incompatible with the thinking of the Roman Catholic Church. George Grant (1918-1988), the Canadian political philosopher wrote:

> As has been the inevitable fate of great prophets, [Marx's] disciples have consistently neglected and misrepresented those aspects of his thought that did not serve their purposes. … The supreme insight in Christianity, according to Marx is the doctrine of the Incarnation, which means that God is no longer 'other' to man, because he has become man. But, according to him, Christianity had never understood the consequences of its own doctrine of the Incarnation. … It is Marx's claim that he has taken what is true in Christianity and liberated it from this limitation. He has taken the doctrine of God become man, freed from its other-worldly associations, and shown how it can be universally realized in the time process. In denying supernatural religion, he believes that he has taken its truth into his philosophy. [58]

Clearly, Marx's "new humanism" has spiritual roots, a philosophical fact that seems to have been overlooked and under-appreciated by many contemporary critics of Marxism schooled in a Christian tradition. A Catholic theologian, Werner Post (1940-2018) supports this perspective in his entry in the *Encyclopedia of Theology*.

> Marxism is the philosophical term used to describe not only Marx's teaching but also the numerous additions, developments, revisions and immanent criticisms of his teaching. … The less true [these revisions are,] the more easily can Christianity come to a reconciliation with Marxism and in a freer society hope for a form of the faith that would be less endangered by ideology. [59]

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philosophical study among its members. Within its fold, the corpus of tradition is being brought continually before the court of definition, in a way which allows the possibility of a dynamic restatement arising in its midst."

[57] Runes, Dagobert, ed. (1963). *Dictionary of Philosophy: Ancient, Medieval, Modern*, s. v. 'Humanitarianism.' Littlefield, Adams.

[58] *Philosophy* 51/53.

[59] *Encyclopedia* s. v. 'Marxism.'

In the spirit and ethos of its time, Marxist humanism was gaining recognition as a type of atheism, Dewart made a significant distinction regarding this special kind of atheism. Marxist atheism seeks its negation in the affirmation of humanity, and not in a cancellation of God.

> Like every other contemporary negation, Marxism is therefore a humanism. But unlike absolute and unconditional atheism, Marxist atheism is atheistic because of a prior commitment to humanism, not vice versa. For this reason it must be called *relative* and *conditional*. It is conditioned by its prior commitment to man, and it is relative to a concept of God according to which he is existentially incompatible with man. [60]

Thus, from a philosophical standpoint, as part of the secular spirit of the times, unadulterated Marxism is a positive philosophy. Its focus is the enhancement of the human existential condition, not on a deprecation of the divinity. From a contemporary perspective, James Feibleman (1904-1987) has made an interesting statement in *The New Materialism* concerning an antiquated theology.

> That we need a new theology and if possible a new religion seems evident from the flaws which science has disclosed in the old ones. In addition, the power of a fresh insight is needed for any renewal which might benefit the human species. The first principle of any such new religion would seem to be this, that God is the principle of similarity as well as of difference and this equally. God cannot be invoked as preferring one thing or one event over another. Whatever happens because it happens has His seal of approval. It would follow that atheists must stand in the same relation to Him as theists. [61]

Dewart suggested a reason for the incompatibility of science and religion in his expanded discussion of their relationship in *The Foundations of of Belief*. He maintained that an uncritical common-sense notion or diagnosis of the tension between the two is incorrect.

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[60] Dewart's italics *Future* 56.
[61] *Materialism* 176.

> The mistaken diagnosis reached by secular Christianity — attributing the incompatibility between traditional Christian doctrine and the developing Western intellect (particularly in its scientific mode) to Christian belief in principle, rather than to Christian belief in its traditional form — has not facilitated its becoming conscious of its own mistaken retention of certain Hellenic cultural forms. [62]

This supposed incompatibility has blinded many philosophers, theologians and scientists to the true flaw, that is, the retention of some of the inadequate foundational principles of ancient Greek philosophy. In Western philosophical thought, it is historically demonstrable that a presumption was made that Greek philosophy is a correct representation of reality. Until recently there is little evidence that the Hellenic philosophical expression of experience might not be universal, but dependent on the particular cultural perception of the ancient Greek mind. Which, of course, is similarly reflected in the presumption of posthuman philosophers. Mahon says: "Digital and genetic technologies and tools, in other words, are effectively what tipped humanism over into posthumanism." [63]

The incompatibility of religion and science is not the only example of such philosophical tension. All human disciplines, to a degree, display this unsettling phenomenon of tension when they attempt to discern the mind of God. Dewart clarifies his own philosophical thinking when he came to understanding philosophically the mind of God.

> Philosophy is not the attempt to reconstruct God's own thought about himself; it is not an effort to reproduce in the human intellect God's own prior philosophical, theological or scientific thought. Hence, philosophical (or other) intellectual problems can be posed strictly from a human viewpoint. If only God knows the answer to a problem then no one knows it, for what this really means is that our questioning has gone astray. [64]

In short, philosophy is not theology and philosophy need not direct its immediate attention to that which is divine. As if anticipating Dewart's perspective, among the new disciplines that repudiate

[62] *Foundations* 118.
[63] *Posthumanism* 6.
[64] *Foundations* 365.

God today, M. D. Petre viewed science and theology as reciprocally responsible for the tension as she interpreted George Tyrrell's insights.

> It was, then, the usurpations of theology [by science] which were, in Tyrrells's view, largely accountable for the difficulties of the simple faithful, in so far as theology [perceived scientifically] thus interfered with natural and direct expression of their faith by subtleties which rendered that faith unreal; and it was, again, theology which was responsible for the difficulties of the scholar, when it forced its way into the realm of scientific knowledge and claimed to be a science with, or over, other sciences, whereas, in its scientific character, it possessed but relative truth." [65]

In accord with Vatican II, Dewart notes that troublesome religious questions have repercussions in other areas of contemporary life. These questions, "which were disturbing to many people," were rooted in a pluralistic philosophical perspective encompassing many diverse and varying points of view. He writes:

> This means that the differences of opinion which operate in this the gravest religious crisis of the Catholic Church, have at bottom to do not with theological or religious questions as such, but with the epistemological, metaphysical and other philosophical questions which underlie theological and religious disputes. [66]

But this incompatibility is not as insurmountable as seems to be implied in the Vatican II document. Faith has its role to play in countering the philosophical repudiation of God. Dewart wrote:

> Although these philosophical matters remain the proper object of human reason, and may not be said to have been revealed, the truth discovered by human reason in their regard may be affirmed by the believer, not only because it is supported by evidence or experience, but also, once it is supported by evidence and experience, because it is supported by its privileged connections with matters of faith. [67]

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[65] *Modernism* 61.
[66] *Religion* 19.
[67] Ibid. 21.

Thus, in a common focus on the human intellectual condition Dewart is willing to acknowledge that philosophy holds a privileged position *vis-à-vis* matters of faith. However, this relationship needs to be understood in terms appropriate to the experience of contemporary Western humanity.

Para. 11.

> "For faith casts a new light on everything and makes known the full ideal which God has set for humanity, thus guiding the mind towards solutions that are fully human."

In his thesis Dewart noted that Pearson, although a man of science, was also a man of faith. Initially he saw no incompatibility between science and faith except for the emerging theory of evolution. Dewart came to the conclusion that philosophy led Pearson to the statistical path of a scientist in which he

> had solved, moreover, his own problem, a very personal problem namely that of finding a 'creed of life' for his own personal guidance and peace of mind. [68]

Such faith in the regularity and predictability of statistics freed Pearson to pursue the scientific work of statistics rather than address the question of the uncertainty of evolution. Pearson sought his "creed of life," ultimately from science, and as history did show his personal philosophical struggles and personal "faith life," coming as he did "from a stock of Dissenters," would soon be forgotten as the discipline of science dominated his academic interests. Since humanity necessarily needs religion as a *sine qua non* of its being, Dewart is correct in observing the unsuitability of a science that had produced nothing to fill the void it created.

> The question is rather that science has done away with the worn-out, outmoded forms of religion, and yet has done nothing to fill the vacuum it has created. For man, by his very nature, needs a religion yet, after the advent of science, nothing has come along to fill this need. The dilemma of

[68] *Development* 7.

> science and religion is not then to be seen by a choice between the two, but by the harmony and integration of both. [69]

Further, in agreement with Peason's view point concerning the unsuitability of religion, Dewart attributed a share of the fault to a lack of true self-understanding on the part of religion as being a significant part of the problem.

> Religion as we know it, has thus forgotten its true nature and set itself up in coalition with science. And, of course, religion has lost the contest; a contest which it should never had entered if it had known its real task; and having lost it, it has fallen into disrepute and at times even into degeneracy. [70]

This insight will lead Dewart to advocate that philosophy be liberated from its dependence on religious faith to supply missing answers to the intellectual questions posed by philosophy. However, in Roman Catholic academic circles, this approach was very much in tune with the intellectual spirit of the times. Had religious faith not become challenged by modern science and lost its true purpose, Dewart could not have drawn this conclusion.

For fully human solutions to global conflicts, Dewart sees the potential for the Catholic faith to open the doors to a re-fashioned *ecclesial* political understanding appropriate to our time, that is, nothing short of a new understanding of the Church. He writes:

> It may be that to make peace, to work towards the making of an unprecedented world without war and, thus, to begin to create a united, catholic world under the sponsorship of the Catholic faith, is the political vocation offered by history to collective *ecclesiastical* Christianity in our time. [71]

As his own philosophical perspective broadened Dewart recognized that Teilhard de Chardin was one whose theological speculations were undertaken in the critical light of faith. Faith and science, being autonomous in their respective roles in the social life of humanity, offered a new opportunity for the Christian faith to create a new political world for humanity.

[69] *Development* 16.
[70] Ibid. 20.
[71] Dewart's italics *Christianity* 287.

> Teilhard's thought was not an apologetic endeavor to 'harmonize' science and the traditional conceptualizations of the Christian faith. It was a creative attempt to follow through to its ultimate consequences a scientific and fully contemporary (scientific) experience in the light of a Christian faith which, on the one hand, functioned to make scientific experience religiously meaningful, but which, on the other required re-interpretation and re-conceptualization in the categories of contemporary experience for the very sake of illuminating that everyday experience. [72]

Faith for Dewart reflects a total self-commitment to one's personal self-identity. Thus, Christian faith, leading to the advancement of the human condition is, in fact, a philosophical existential reality. He specifies:

> More precisely, a faith is a commitment of one's existential self in the light of certain circumstances of reality as disclosed in lived experience. [73]

The Christian faith casts a new light on humanity's efforts on the assumption that it is true. The claim is based on revelation which is not a philosophical idea, but an experienced reality of God's self-communication to the faithful. As an existential event, the truth of the Christian faith can only be recognized and interpreted through a philosophical tradition subject to cultural and critical appraisals that focus on human experience appropriate to each age, according to Dewart. Thus, philosophy cannot be a static approach, but must be a dynamic one, based on human intellectual growth.

> The continuity of Christian tradition is required by Christian belief, not because the Christian faith *was* true, and therefore must forever remain what it once was: it is required because the Christian faith *is* true, and because we wish it to grow and intensify and fulfill its truth in the time that is yet to come. [74]

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[72] *Future* 43.
[73] Ibid. 61.
[74] Dewart's italics *Foundations* 114.

It would seem that for Dewart, at one point in his career, given the influence of the spirt of renewal, a secular faith would not be possible. Faith is a religious experience which somehow transcends mere biological experience. He reasons thus.

> What religious experience really reveals is that the meaning of existence is not to be found within existence itself, but beyond. And when the human existence reveals this, human experience has become *religious* belief. Moreover, it is the experience of *belief*: since being remains the object of experience, this revelation has the peculiar quality of faith. [75]

For Dewart faith, directs the consciousness of the human mind, not to human solutions, but rather to its awareness of the transcendence of a reality beyond humanity thus casting a new light on everything.

> Let us say, then, that faith is the manifestation of self-understanding in the presence of a reality that transcends the transcendence of the consciousness of man. [76]

The irony in this passage is that Dewart seems to be directing one's philosophical attention to the transcendent God, whereas the Council is directing one's philosophical attention to humanity. It is in Dewart's understanding that humanity will find *human* solutions to its problems in the *presence* of God. The solutions to human problems are not revealed by God's direct agency, but by humanity's indirect agency in light of faith in God. Thus, faith becomes an experiential reality of trust, not a theory of unrequited hope in the face of imperfect human knowledge.

> Hence, the relations of faith and experience [finding human solutions] should be ruled in accordance with the idea that faith is but the transcendent dimension of man's experience of reality, rather than the idea that faith is the imperfect knowledge of a transcendental, trans-empirical realm of transcendent being. [77]

[75] Dewart's italics *Foundations* 441.
[76] *Foundations* 461.
[77] Ibid. 462.

Human solutions to the problems of Western contemporary society are institutionalized solutions from a transformation of a culture's activity due to artistry and technological science, according to Dewart.

> If society, culture, and our entire mode of life are the consequences of consciousness, then the theory should account for all that human beings are today. … It should explain why the kind of society and culture has emerged where art, law, politics, morality and economic, social, and other conventions, but above all religion and philosophy — though more recently also science — have traditionally institutionalized the means to satisfy the requirements of the specificity human form of adjustment. [78]

Thus, in agreement with paragraph 11, institutionalization of the environment must incorporate the Christian perspective of faith for any solution to be truly human, and not merely industrial or mechanical. That is, not merely human secularity is required, but also required is a basis in faith for environmental problems. In the Foreword to Dewart's posthumously published work, Cajetan Menke wrote:

> but belief calls for faith; the scholarship of this exercise calls for open-minded cognition. [79]

Thus, human solutions call for open-minded strategies since such solutions are not made in heaven by God with a guarantee of success. Of themselves, human solutions possess no guarantee of success. Significantly and somewhat accurately, Dewart observed that

> somewhat like the unfortunate life strategies that precipitate self-defeating neurotic behaviour in most of us at least upon occasion, the game plan of modern philosophy has often amounted to philosophy's attempting to solve the problems of the mind by recycling its failures. [80]

However, while not initially evident, I maintain that Dewart's mind is in tune with the spirit of renewal of the Council. In other words, philosophers have not learned from their past mistakes. For the believer, it is self-evident that while human solutions may attempt new hypotheses in

[78] *Evolution* 21.
[79] *Challenge* 3.
[80] Ibid. 54.

solving problems, without faith as the Council has observed, these solutions remain plagued by the old assumptions but expressed in a new garb. The old arguments of the existence of God need to be reevaluated before faith may show the mind an enlightened way to human solutions. In Dewart's words:

> In sum, the existential interpretation does not of itself argue against the existence of God, but rendered him irrelevant to the existing world and made possible thus the 'secularity' of the modern world. [81]

Secularity, understood in the spirit of the enlightenment of religious renewal, is not a denial of God. Secularity, rather, does not affirm God's relevance to humanity. That is to say, secularization, or secular*ity*, seeks to find a proper role for God in society, whereas secular*ism* is, in fact, God denying. Albert Keller made the distinction that secularity "means independence and adulthood with regard to religion." Whereas, secularism "would be the end of all religion." [82] In the 21 century and beyond humanity must find a new role for the divinity in a secularized society. [83]

In light of the renewal envisioned by the Council what is then Dewart's understanding of faith? It is certain that faith does not have the same meaning in all religions. As a matter of fact, Dewart reserves the understanding of faith to the three religious traditions that reveal, at their core, the need for human salvation, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These global religions are not typical of the "genus" religion and neither is their understanding of faith, according to Dewart's philosophical perspective. For these monotheistic religions present faith as the "order of knowledge" that has been revealed by God and is true in its content. The problem is that much of contemporary humanity no longer accepts divine revelation as a universal and binding phenomenon.

> The questions that prompt 'religion' are universal, but 'religions' take many different forms. We should caution ourselves against our natural tendency

[81] *Challenge* 68.
[82] *Encyclopedia* 1554/1555.
[83] As a point of interest, the terms God, religion, theology and spiritualism, but not secularism or secularity, appear in appear in Runes, Dagobert, ed. (1963). *Dictionary of Philosophy: Ancient, Medieval, Modern*, Littlefield, Adams. However, a few years later, in the mind of the Council "secularity" appears with a positive aspect derived from a sociological perspective. "While it is true that secular institutes are not religious institutes, at the same time they embody a true and full profession of the evangelical counsels in the world, recognized by the church. …[T]he institutes themselves ought to preserve their own special character – their secular character, that is to say – to the end that they may be able to carry on effectively and everywhere the apostolate in the world … for which they were founded" (*Vatican* 392.)

to think of all religions as if they followed the same pattern as the religions that have long been familiar to most of us. Which means, of course, Judaism and Christianity — although Islam, the third 'biblical religion,' has in very recent times entered into our everyday consciousness as well. Our thinking about 'religion' is likely to be distorted, because these religions (along with a few others, almost all of Indo-European origin), share characteristics that make them atypical of the genus. Indeed, they are highly unusual. … For in the absence of evidence in its favour, and even when confronted with indications to the contrary, those who share this 'faith' do not merely 'believe' or 'guess,' or 'suppose,' or 'estimate,' but positively *affirm*, with the utmost assurance and devotion, the truth of their beliefs. In these religions, therefore, believing itself becomes an object of belief: faith is believed to be a gift from God, and a possible sign of the believer's 'election.' Therefore, one does not believe because one chooses to believe; one believes because one has been chosen to believe. … For the all-absorbing goal and constantly explicit preoccupation of these regions is 'salvation,' that is, avoidance of the extinction of oneself at death, and enjoyment of a perfect and eternal life of happiness thereafter. As Paul the apostle himself acknowledged, faith provides not only 'the evidence of things unseen' but also 'the substance of things hoped for.' The kind of faith that these religions solicit and promote, generates absolute certainty, since the faith is God-given. And it is not at all difficult to misinterpret the experience of certainty for the discovery of truth. [84]

Para. 33.

"Thanks, above all, to an increase in all kinds of interchange between nations the human family is gradually coming to recognize itself and constitute itself as one single community world-wide. As a result, it now produces by its own enterprise

[84] Dewart's italics *Challenge* 107/108.

> many things which in former times it expected would come largely from heavenly powers."

The words, "by its own enterprise," Dewart understood as modern science to having taken over supplying many of humanity's needs from the 1800's onwards. These needs were previously expected to be previously met by a divine source. He wrote:

> For until then science had remained a matter of concern for relatively few people. It was only when science began to produce the marvels that appealed to the imagination and desires of the masses that the scientist was accorded a relatively high social status and that science became aware and conscious of its power as a social force and of its influence over large numbers of human beings. [85]

Science is not individually oriented, as are philosophy and theology, in interpreting experience. Science appeals to a higher degree of objectivity that many minds actually achieve at a particular stage of development in their mental processes, Dewart argued.

> The reason why scientific knowledge is universally valid is that all normal human beings have the same sort of mental faculties and equipment, and, therefore, the same sort of mental processes. [86]

But he also recognized that in human mental processes not all humans are philosophers and not all humans are scientists either.

But the transference of enterprise from "heavenly powers" to human agency does not always automatically result in retaining the negative aspects of theological interpretation. What traditionally has been expressed negatively in theological terms as original sin, Dewart expresses with reservation from a human and secular point of view. Sin has become a "cultural neurosis" rather than being understood in religious thinking as a theological reality.

> Now, in any culture, be it ontic or phenomenal, it may well come about that the ability of human beings to exert power over external reality, and over themselves and each other, exceeds their ability to manage such power in

[85] *Development* 15.
[86] Ibid. 67.

> accordance with their own and other people's best individual and collective interests. … For [lack of such management] explains why ontic speakers are especially susceptible to this ailment, why as a matter of historical fact the ontic cultures have distinguished themselves in this unenviable respect, and why cultural neuroses have appeared in Western culture and in our own age in acute form and on an unprecedentedly large, global scale. [87]

Such an inadequate interchange among humans is not limited to a modern techno-digital phenomenon from Dewart's perspective. Human interchange occurs on a philosophical and theological levels as humans become increasingly responsible for the success or failure of their own future.

> It is not an implausible hypothesis, I mention in passing that this antimony — the classical theological problem of "freedom and grace" — has fuelled the inner development of our originally Christian culture, and is responsible for (a) the increasing awareness of the modern Western secular mind of the reality and the value of human freedom, (b) its dwindling belief in fate, and (c) its ever-growing conviction that the outcome of individual and collective human striving rests in human hands. [88]

The notion that humanity fashions its own world, independently of God's will, is evident to Dewart through the artifacts with which humanity surrounds itself. In short, what we make of our culture, we make of ourselves, quite independently of any divine agency involved.

> He who would understand man must, as it were, adopt the motto: *si naturam requires, circumspice*. That is, if you wish to understand the nature of man you must look to the world he brings about, you must observe how he transforms whatever lies within his horizon, you must examine how he extends and projects himself outwardly in time and space and, above all, you must discover how he gives a distinctive shape to the indeterminate future and this brings off the creation of history through his consciousness of that which he thinks and believes and does today. And the same is true,

[87] *Evolution* 303.
[88] Ibid. 335.

> in every fundamental respect, of every other reality. It is even true of the reality of God. [89]

Para. 36.

> "If by the autonomy of earthly affairs is meant the gradual discovery, utilization and ordering of the laws and values of matter and society, then the demand for autonomy is perfectly in order: it is at once the claim of human kind today and the desire of the creator. By the very nature of creation, material being is endowed with its own stability, truth and excellence, its own order and laws."

In his study of Pearson's thought, Dewart notes the "ordering of laws and values" in the cosmos from a scientific perspective only. By any stretch of the imagination it is clear from his perspective that these laws are independent of a divine mind.

> For in a chaotic universe thought itself would be impossible, since thought is order. … But thought and conception exist. The argument therefore is absurd, and the orderliness of the universe stands. Pearson does not seem to imply, however, that the order of the world is fashioned by the nature of the mind. The argument is merely that our thought, which mirrors reality to some unspecified extent shows stability and order. … Thus, the fact that we can think demonstrates that 'there is a definite relation, a fixed order between one finite thing another. This definite relation, this finite order is what we term law' [said Pearson]. From this fact we can then derive the basic law of all knowledge, namely the principle of causality. [90]

The demand for an existential earthly autonomy is a political question reflecting the relationship between humanity and God. This phenomenon is recognized within the historical development of Christian theism. For Dewart, the question is not, "does God act upon other beings and nature?" But, rephrased,

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[89] *Religion* 89.
[90] *Development* 31/32.

> the question is rather: what can (and what, if anything, cannot) happen, once God and man enter into personal relations. The problem is not how to explain a metaphysical property of God which would have implications for us, but how to understand the reciprocal relations between man and God and, in particular, how mutual power enters into the relationship. The problem has to do, as it were, with the politics of man and God. [91]

Dewart traces this insight, that creation has its own stability, to the refinements of later interpreters of Thomas Aquinas. Thus, Thomas's initial understanding gave rise to the understanding of the autonomy of creation.

> It was not only that the reasonableness of belief in God was eroded as the potential scepticism of the doctrine of St. Thomas was gradually drawn out. The existential contingency of creatures whose existence was an act which intrinsically belonged to their own intelligibility, their own essence, implied also their existential autonomy. … [T]he Christian faith itself had always served that very end, and it served that very end, in one way, through the philosophy, (St. Thomas', as it so happens), which at the appropriate historical moment it inspired. [92]

Dewart dismissed the desire to include a creator within his philosophical perspective as he recalled Laplace's words. However, to be noted is that reference to Laplace is not unique to Dewart. [93] For Laplace, it seems clear that the world exists, but it does not exist as an intelligible structure of divine creation. Rather, the world is an historical reality on its own.

> The world has no intelligible structure, but it has history. Things are in motion and suffused with mutual relativity. They do not happen at random, and there is a reason not only why anything is but also why it is *as* it is. But this reason is not any inner structural constituent of its being: it is its simple

[91] *Future* 190.

[92] *Foundations* 205/206.

[93] There is an anecdote concerning Pierre-Simon, Marquis de Laplace (1749 – 1827). Napoleon was told about a book Laplace had written which contained no mention of the name of God. Napoleon allegedly said to him "they tell me you have written a book on the system of the universe, and have never even mentioned its Creator." Laplace answered, "I had no need of that hypothesis."

> situation in a world which is already in motion and ultimately, it is the situation of the world as a whole. [94]

Dewart's attitude to philosophy and experience in critical thinking has brought him to gradually discover the order and laws apparent in human society. The agency of such a discovery potentially resides in all human beings. Order, the opposite of chaos, and like beauty, is in the mind of the beholder, not in nature itself. It is a discovery that humanity makes about itself and the agency, or lack of agency, of the gods.

> I am disinclined to believe in the hidden power of the immanent divinities which, as Thales thought, all things are full of. Belief in the Christian God implies, so far as I am concerned, a positive disbelief in Fate: necessity be damned, for all I care. I refuse — let me make the religious nature of this act of un-faith clear, I refuse — until, if ever, I should be shown otherwise, to believe the primitive superstitions that there are implicit necessities within being, that being has, as its very reality, an inner warrant to command assent, and that the invisible predeterminations constitute it and make it definable as that which has an antecedent call on the intellect. [95]

In rejecting traditional theism Dewart accepts the Council's concept of creation possessing its own order, stability and excellence. This is part of the spirit of renewal. He does this by distinguishing between animal experience and human experience, recognizing that human ideas, and reason, are intellectual elevations to the next level of conscious evolution in any culture and society inhabited by *homo sapiens*.

> We shall be interested next in pursuing the consequences of consciousness for human life. It is a defining characteristic of all life that it tends to preserve itself by adjusting to its environment; and it is typical of animal life that its adjustment is mediated by sensory abilities that furnish the organism with experience of itself and its world. Since the conscious quality of human experience is irreducible to an organic function, however, the concept of *adjustment* cannot be simply and univocally transferred from

[94] Dewart's italics *Foundations* 295.
[95] *Religion* 162.

> animal to human organisms, but must be suitably adapted to take account of the human peculiarities. Human adjustment differs from the animal kind in that man's relations to his environment are mediated by a special kind of experience: the sort, as we have seen, that endows him with a sense of selfhood and a sense of reality. Unlike an animal, a human being adjusts by relating himself (a) to a world that he perceives as real; (b) to himself, whom he perceives as a self; and (c) to other selves, whom he perceives as beings who perceive themselves as selves and him as a self. Human society and culture, therefore, depend upon and are manifestations of, the specifically human form of adjustive experience. [96]

It is this specific adjustive experience characteristic of the next evolutionary level that gives nature its apparent stability, truth and excellence within Dewart's understanding of the spirit of renewal in this Conciliar age. But I wonder in light of Mahon's observations, if such stability, truth and excellence can be imported successfully into a posthuman culture. Rather than observe "renewal" in such studies, he sees fragmentation occurring in its place and

> as being responsible for producing "an explosion of scholarship" in the humanities. But, one might wonder, if this "explosion" is not better understood as the fragmentation of the humanities into ever more narrowly-focused and boundary boutique-y "niche-studies." How and when would such fragmentation stop? One might also wonder how such niche studies would bring about a new future for the humanities….? [97]

For Dewart the "utilization and ordering of the laws and values of matter" has taken on the technological scientific character of modern times.

> But since cognitive philosophy of mind proposes a new conception of the *explicandum,* the earlier efforts of philosophy are altogether irrelevant to its present concerns and future success. A further reason why the ill-considered convictions of the past are best forgotten is that the reformulation of the problem of the mind has brought about a new vision of the nature and

[96] Dewart's italics *Evolution* 15.
[97] *Posthumanism* 258.

> methods of philosophy of mind. Philosophy of mind is now allied with science and charged with ancillary scientific functions: it is a branch of philosophy of science concerning itself with the conceptual foundation and problems of the sciences of the mind. [98]

Dewart posits that the autonomy of earthly affairs was gradually discovered as a characteristic of the modern *Weltanshauung*, or one's "world view," in contrast to the inherited world view of a philosophically unified medieval Europe.

> The existential interpretation included a theological component that demands religious faith, but from which non-believers can readily abstract; its omission does not change what the doctrine proposes about the reality of the world. The aspect of the doctrine that particularly concerns us — not least of all because it was a far-reaching truth which marked the beginning of the eventual transition from the mediaeval to the typically modern *Weltanshauung* can be summed up in the proposition that the "reality" of the world *inhered* in real beings and was distinct from their properties. In other words, *in addition* to their various characteristics — that is, over and above their having whatever properties may have been truly predictable of them — real objects would count also on what the fourteenth century philosophers learned to call their "existence." Everything in the world *did* its own existing, and its existing was therefore *its own*. Conversely, nothing was real unless it should have *its own* "existence." This was most clearly evident in living beings, whose existence is the same as their "life," and whose life was not a property, but a contingent and temporarily limited fact. But it was — and is — true of everything in the world. [99]

Paragraph 36 is very much a Hellenic-inspired passage incorporated into the Council document. The "desire of the creator" is nothing but the Christianization of the ancient Greek philosophical idea of Fate.

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[98] *Challenge* 27.
[99] Dewart's italics *Challenge* 61.

> Thus, when Christian civilization emerged out of the ruins of its Greco-Roman predecessor, belief in Fate was retained, but only after it had undergone a critical adaptation. It ceased to be an abstract, impersonal, and amoral cosmic force and was now identified with the concrete, personal, fair, and indeed *merciful* Will of God. The Christian theologians did not deny, of course — not any more than the Greek philosophers had — that human and other causal agents could be said to *cause* events. Instead, they attempted to rationalize the doctrine by excogitating *ad hoc,* for example, the concept of God's "physical premotion." That is, the First Cause willed that the effect of "secondary causes" such as the human will actually take place. … From early times Christianity experienced great difficulty reconciling the omnipotence of God with the effectiveness and freedom of human causality. Two thousand years later, the theological controversies have yet to arrive at any but paradoxical results. [100]

If this is true, then I think Dewart's understanding of "nature" sheds new light on the classical understanding traditionally interpreted as "natural law." Classical natural law had been conceived out a more primitive law understood as given by the Greek gods for the benefit of their citizenry. In support of that thesis, Dickinson quotes Demosthenes, the ancient Hellenic orator, who lived 384-322 B. C.

> That is the law which all men ought to obey for many reasons, and especially because *every law is an invention and gift of the gods*, a resolution of wise men, a correction of errors intentional and unintentional, a compact of the whole state, according to which all who belong to the state ought to live. [101]

Whether of pagan or Christian origin, for Dewart, there is no divine source to natural law that reveals the mind of any divinity. He observed:

> Nowadays, of course, "nature" need not be taken with the same meaning as *physis* or *natura*, but as signifying merely "what we want to understand"

[100] Dewart's italics *Challenge* 118.
[101] My italics *Greek* 128.

> about a given being or phenomenon; this is the sense in which I use the term "nature" when I speak in my own behalf. [102]

Dewart reaffirms the concept of the autonomy of material creation, as the Council acknowledges, as arising out of St. Thomas's thought.

> The two crucial provisions of Aquinas's proposal were that the creatures that made up the world (a) were inherently real that is, both their reality and their nature were truly *their own* and (b) had truly effective causal powers *of their own,* which they could exercise on their own initiative. [103]

However, he understands "autonomy" in a significantly different sense than the Council fathers.

> In the philosophy of Aquinas God does not *lend* to creatures, and specifically to human beings, their *act* of being; he gives it to them. That is, the property title passes from him to them when they exercise their act of existence; therefore, once created, they are *autonomous*. [104]

But as philosophy progresses towards its posthuman stage, Mahon comments that

> what should be starting to disappear are not only the concepts of the body that see it as "self-contained," "whole," or "autonomous," but also the identities, ideologies politics and theories built on those notions. [105]

Para. 42.

> "By its very nature and mission the church is universal in that it is not committed to any one culture or to any political, economic or social system."

Science, like the church's mission, enjoys an autonomy from the environment out of which it had developed. That is, science is not confined to Western culture. Rather, it transcends culture as it acquires its own content. As Dewart has noted:

> Indeed, if there were any other fields of knowledge which could legitimately claim to be true and reliable, they would *ipso facto* become scientific

[102] *Challenge* 125.
[103] Dewart's italics Ibid. 151.
[104] Dewart's italics Ibid. 164.
[105] *Posthumanism* 62.

> knowledge. This is because by definition, any true knowledge is scientific knowledge; for scientific knowledge is that knowledge obtained by scientific method, which is defined as the method by which critical evidence is accumulated. [106]

He had further quoted Pearson:

> The very word knowledge, indeed, only applies to the product of the scientific method. Other methods may lead to fantasy, as that of the poet or of the metaphysician, but never to knowledge. [107]

Fantasy, poetry and metaphysics lack the experience of "causality in any sense of a modern scientific meaning." Thus, Dewart has drawn the conclusion:

> For, as has been seen, the concept of causality is founded on the fact that phenomena and therefore our experience follow an ascertainable and codifiable routine. [108]

That is, only causality brings about physical effects. In the philosophical classical view, there is no external force that impinges upon spiritual, poetic, fantastic or metaphysical phenomena.

Given the political, economic and social systems from which the church's mission is to be made free, I would add that the Church ought to be made free from the scholastic philosophical and theological systems of Medieval Europe. Ironically, these intellectual systems are preventing the Church from keep pacing with modern social and scientific developments. With respect to modern humanity's self-understanding, Charles Davis has written somewhat harshly.

> The account I have given of freedom concludes my outline of the change in man's self-understanding. It enables us to see the general objection of modern men to the Church. The modern rebellion against the Church is the determination of men to be themselves. They want freedom to become themselves, and with some reason they are convinced that the Church would refuse this freedom if it could. Almost every step along the way of the development of modern man and his world has been opposed by the Church.

[106] *Development* 66.
[107] Ibid. 66.
[108] Ibid. 77.

> But men have succeeded at last in throwing off the crippling shackles of an obsolete Church. And they will no longer tolerate the ecclesiastical refusal to allow human beings to grow and be themselves. Churchman may thunder about modern licence. Ordinary people know well enough that what they are trying to do is simply to find themselves and attain the development appropriate to them as adult human beings. [109]

As a matter of fact, contemporary religious authorities often contribute to the intellectual stagnation of the Church's renewal of the philosophy of mind, as Dewart noted in his thesis. His observation into modern academia's neglect of the positive contribution of later scholastic theologians is significant. In modern times theology has been used as a stopgap measure to provide temporary answers where philosophy was perceived to have failed.

> Such men as John Scotus, Anselm, and Abelard represented the foremost thought of their day. There was a vast amount of genuine thought (nowadays sadly neglected) in the later scholastics, such as Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and William of Occam. "These men did probably all that was possible to harmonise natural and revealed religion to preserve the peace between religion and faith. With them Scholasticism exhausted itself. Philosophy could go no further till she was free of theology," [110]

as Pearson noted in his *The Ethic of Free Thought*. Dewart cited Cuba as an example of a Catholic society unwilling to change in light of modern developments, but yet retain its adherence to colonial values. From an historical perspective he wrote that

> though many have recently discovered that indifference to the institutions of religion is the norm among Cubans who are Catholic by inertia and custom, deeply devout in an instinctive way, and in communion with the Church only through the desiccated umbilical cord of cultural tradition, we are not as likely to know that the profound alienation between the people and the clergy (hence between the people and the sacraments and the liturgy), began well over a century ago. As Cuba began to acquire a national consciousness and stir from her long colonial lethargy, the Cuban hierarchy

[109] *Question* 197.
[110] *Development* 111, n. 241.

> and clergy, who had always remained more closely identified with the mother country than with the masses, chose to remain faithful to Spain. [111]

When mistakenly identified with a particular culture the mission of the Church becomes more recognized as a political phenomenon, as opposed to a religious one. There are consequences to the Church's political self-understanding when it loses touch with the people. This is one of the lessons to be learned from the Cuban experience according to Dewart.

> The Cuban Church seems to have thought that, having been rejected by its world, it needed no longer to live in it, as if the Word Himself, because He was God, had not chosen to become man and sanctify the world by sharing the world, by sharing bread, wine, water, with mankind. To the same degree that it mistook itself, it also misunderstood the nature of the sociopolitical events around it. [112]

With a degree of hindsight, today one can easily understand that the deep on-going question raised here has yet to be answered satisfactorily by the Church herself. That is, without its cultural legacy the universal Church has no adaptive compass for the future. In Dewart's words:

> How shall the Body of Christ as it ages and matures, and as it finally comes to its childhood's end, adapt to an emerging worldwide civilization (a civilization which being Catholic may be presumed by disposition and unconscious desire), adapt to a civilization which liquidates not only the medieval, but also the 'modern' post-medieval world along with its own foundations in the cultural forms inherited from the classical Greco-Roman world. [113]

The Church must commit herself to be present within a cultural context without being that cultural presence. The danger, however, with local cultural identification, is that the Church becomes irrelevant or obsolete as the culture moves into a scientific and universal self-understanding. Today

[111] *Christianity* 92.
[112] *Christianity* 183.
[113] Ibid.

science is the dominant manner through which modern humanity expresses itself despite science's many on-going revisions, and as Dewart has noted:

> However, this knowledge brings problems in its wake. First, we cannot know without becoming different. Knowledge is transforming and therefore requires readjustment. [114]

What this translates to is that given the average rate of change in cultural evolution because of scientific intervention and advancement, philosophical adaptation has failed to keep up with this accelerated rate of change. But the mission of the church, itself being universal, means that the Church must also be creative and adaptive to its environment on a local level. An Orthodox example illustrates this point. In discussing the expansion of the Russian Orthodox Church into Alaska in the mid-1800's Nicholas Ferencz stated:

> I am arguing here that the foundations of American Orthodoxy were laid in a congregationalist manner precisely because they were formed by groups of Orthodox laity without the leadership of, or even input from, the Orthodox hierarchy. [115]

Ferencz spoke of a "moral absence" of the hierarchy, in the sense of not being politically present, in the establishment of the Russian Orthodox Church thus leaving the laity to be creative in adapting to their environmental situation. To my way of thinking Dewart expressed a similar notion.

> We must now commit ourselves for longer, with fewer opportunities of later changing our minds. It is an entire historical age that is being fashioned today. We are not simply the actors on a historical stage already set: We are the creators of a whole world to come. [116]

Or, expressed historically, with a philosophical proviso.

> To believe in the Judeo-Christian revelation is to believe that we exist in a certain historical condition definable by certain events — all of which might have been otherwise. [117]

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[114] *Christianity* 191.
[115] *American* 113.
[116] *Christianity* 194.
[117] Ibid. 204.

Some less critical philosophers and theologians may be attempted to envision that, in the future, the Church's mission may still require its own universal cultural presence as the earlier expressions of the Church become irrelevant. A universal cultural form of expression is required for the Church to evolve, they believe. To my mind, that is no more likely to happen than humanity consciously evolving a universal cultural form to express itself. Diversity, not uniformity, in cultural forms is the future norm. Such an ecclesiastical universalized cultural form does not seem to show any evidence of materializing at the time Dewart wrote *Christianity and Revolution.*

> The fact that this collective Christian faith, which is the Church, cannot exist without cultural forms, any more than the individual person's faith could exist without humanity, does not mean that such forms are acquired only by means of that process which anthropologists call acculturation. In the history of Christianity certain cultural forms previously extant and established, namely, the Greek and Roman, were appropriated and transformed by acculturation. By adapting them, hallowing and baptizing them, Christianity acquired a Hellenic complex. But now it has wrung them dry: In virtue of its very success in developing and transforming these cultural forms they have become inadequate for the continued life and development of the Christian faith. The Christian crisis of this age, thus, is definable in terms of the inadequacies of the Hellenic complex. … Moreover, there would be little point, even if it were possible, in turning to other extant cultural forms. The time has come, therefore, for Christianity to create its own cultural forms. No doubt, this creation, required by the development of our history, demands by its very nature continuity with tradition: There is no material out of which to create the Christian cultural forms of the future except our past and our history. But the continuity of this creative process with the past should not in the slightest detract from its being a process or from its being creative. [118]

[118] *Christianity* 285/286.

Thus, the mission of the Church, or its salvific presence which is the same thing, is not restricted to a particular cultural expression. Differing cultural forms express the same reality and existence of the Church but without uniformity of convention. Concerning the Church's mission he wrote:

> It is not certain, for instance, that the mission of the Church can be properly described in terms of conveying an idea to those outside it. Christianity has a *mission*, not a *message*. The Gospel in not a textbook of the Christian faith; as *news* it is the report of an event that *happens*. To fulfill its mission, the creation of the Kingdom of God, and to achieve its role as the historical vehicle of God's self-communication to man, the Church must seek to extend itself to all mankind, and must therefore appeal, teach, preach and communicate itself. But what it communicates is its reality and existence, not an idea. [119]

The notion of universality does not take the form of uniformity in Dewart's thinking. Rather, even in the case of of the Church's mission, universality is best understood as expressed through a mosaic of cultural norms. [120] That is, no one aspect constitutes the whole picture as humanity has evolved from a pre-civilized to a civilized society and now possibly beyond to a posthuman civilization. Quaintly put, humanity has come down from the trees, surpassing the global village, and now attempts to reach for the stars through the evolution of techno-digital scientific culture.

> Man is entering into the time of "post-civilization," as [Ken Boulding, the economist] has called it. It is also, by the same token, the age of the "global village," a mode of human self-organization that is at once more fragmented and more highly integrated — it is a 'mosaic' — than every human culture of the past. [121]

This mosaic has not ceased to evolve. Further, Dewart's notion of culture is that its "forms are not accidental to, but constitutive of, human experience." Each form reflects a different aspect of truth. He wrote that this view

> is instinctively correct in its belief that Christianity's adaptation of hellenic forms did not corrupt its truth. But it mistakenly assumes that the truth of

[119] Dewart's italics *Future* 8.
[120] I am of the opinion that any revision of the Code of Canon Law will need to reflect a diversity of governance.
[121] *Foundations* 24.

> Christianity prevented it from having a contingent cultural form — and that, therefore, if Hellenism provided the cultured forms of Christianity, it must have done so not insofar as it was a contingent cultural form, but insofar as this cultural form embodied eternal, necessary truths. Needless to say, it is this very understanding of the truth and of its relation to human culture that is being questioned in this book. [122]

The nature and mission together constituted the Church in the Council's mind and were equally significant as it faced the future. Its nature and mission were not static concepts, according to Dewart, but they reflected a dynamic self-understanding of the faithful.

> The point is that whatever the Church becomes, it will become what it makes of itself. Again, if the new forms of the Church will be creatively determined, extrapolation may be of very limited usefulness. Nevertheless, the changes which the Church is likely to undergo (say, within a generation or so) could be subsumed under two headings. First, the diminution of all institutional forms which rest upon a juridical basis and of all rigid structures and, conversely, the growing importance of institutions grounded upon social relations and of those which have flexible structures. Superimposed upon this there may well be a more general trend towards more formal and more numerous structures, but each less influential and powerful than heretofore. It would not be incorrect to refer to these two trends respectively as the *socialization* and *democratization* of the Church. Like human culture as a whole, Christianity in the future may become more of a do-it-yourself affair than at any previous time. [123]

Dewart expressed the notion of diversity in different terms but they expressed the mind of the Council Fathers with reference to the evolution of the human species. As humans are not committed to one political, economic or social system, they are not committed to one manner or form of speech which generates the particularity of human (religious) consciousness.

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[122] *Foundations* 107.
[123] Dewart's italics *Foundations* 489/490.

> The hypothesis that speech generates consciousness has enabled us to subsume a number of observable facts under a single theoretical explanation of how the human specificity originated and thereafter continued to evolve. The theory, however, has performed a service that was no part of the burden originally placed upon it: it has alerted us to the fact that the unity of the human species, definable by the universality of thematic speech and of the capacity for self-definition, does not imply uniformity. The human specificity — the human mind — seems to have appeared in variant forms. The question thus arises: what is the evolutionary significance of the racial division of mankind? [124]

Dewart treated summarily the nature of the Church and its mission as social phenomena reflected by the three monotheistic religions. These religious expressions claimed a universal role in human affairs.

> The questions that prompt "religion" are universal, but "religions" take many different forms. We should caution ourselves against our natural tendency to think of all religions as if they followed the same pattern as the religions that have long been familiar to most of us. Which means, of course, Judaism and Christianity — although Islam, the third "biblical religion," has in very recent times entered into our everyday consciousness as well. Our thinking about "religion" is likely to be distorted, because these religions (along with a few others, almost all of Indo-European origin), share characteristics that make them atypical of the genus. Indeed, they are highly unusual. [125]

That the nature and mission of the Church are not committed to one form of cultural interpretation is a major philosophical perspective advanced by Dewart.

> For a society's initial assumptions regarding the human mind, the nature of reality, and the causation of events, are revealed in the earliest religious beliefs of human cultures. And the study of primitive religions shows that

[124] *Evolution* 357.
[125] *Challenge* 107.

> not all cultures seem predisposed towards making the same initial assumptions we Europeans do. Most of mankind's primitive religions exhibit somewhat different attitudes towards the human situation from those which have ruled in our tradition, and in particular on whether human beings exist under a regime of Necessity (and thus, whether the world is a caldron of competing causal forces), and whether the world we inhabit is the measure of "reality," or whether there is a viewpoint to the world from which the world is "watched." [126]

It almost goes without saying that a "watched" world implies a "watcher" whether transcendent or immanent.

Para 54.

> "As a result, modern culture is characterized as follows: … industrialization, urbanization, and other factors which promote community living create new mass-cultures which give birth to new patterns of thinking, of acting, and of the use of leisure. …"

The Council failed to recognize significantly other factors of community living such as the biological theory of evolution which is characteristic of modern Western science. The Council also failed to recognize importance of philosophical theories of evolution which is characteristic of Western sociology. Both biological and philosophical approaches have reflected a spirit of renewal within the experience of contemporary humanity. Belief in evolution brings about a change in personal belief and a change in the character of the culture. As Parsons, Shils, Naegele and Pitts note in the Preface to *Theories of Society*: "The selections we have brought together document what we believe to constitute a major revolution in scholarly and professional thinking about the nature and determinants of human conduct in society." [127] Dewart recognized that, in fact, these

[126] *Challenge* 345.
[127] Parsons, T., Shils, E., Naegele, K., and Pitts, J., (eds). *Theories of Society: Foundations of Modern Sociological Theory* (2 vols.) Free Press of Glencoe, 1961.

novel ways of thinking have brought about new tensions. Person's experience is cited as an example.

> But what originally was not more than indifference, gave rise, before he left Cambridge, to open rebellion against compulsory attendance at chapel and divinity lectures. It is true that what he primarily rebelled against was being compelled to attend religious exercises and lectures rather than against these activities themselves, — but the fact remains that he thought that it was impossible simultaneously to hold the theory of evolution and the traditional Christian faith. [128]

A further characteristic of modern culture originating with the evolution of philosophy, according to Dewart, was the lack of belief in the traditional God of biblical revelation.

> But the deeper question concerns an issue at once more fundamental and more comprehensive, namely, the meaningfulness of Christian belief for the experience and self-understanding of man in a modern, industrial, technological society. If we put it this way, the question looms considerably larger. For the experience and the self-concept of modern man do not merely fail to accord with institutional Christianity: they appear to conflict with Christianity's most basic doctrines and, in the first place, in God. [129]

Further, the scientific method as a characteristic of modern culture was under appreciated by the Council Fathers. The scientific perspective has introduced a new perspective on human self-consciousness. While humans have always been conscious, they may not have always been self-conscious as human beings, or *homo sapiens*. This insight is clearly an historical advancement in human self-understanding.

> To be precise, modern man creates himself by means of science, that is, by means of his scientific mode of consciousness. For science is part of his self-creative endeavour. There is only a *figurative* sense, therefore, in which science does make man, namely, in the sense that it is *scientific culture* that defines *contemporary man*. Thus, what counts is neither the results nor the

[128] *Development* 16.
[129] *Future* 16.

> methods of science, but the human reality, the human experience and self-understanding, which produce the scientific method and scientific world-views, an experience and self-understanding which are then reciprocally molded by man's own scientific and other cultural creations. … It is not on science as such, but on the contemporary cultural stage of human self-consciousness, typically manifested in and conditioned by science and technology, that is the traditional Christian faith grates. [130]

The Council also failed to take note that theological modernism is a product of contemporary culture. Perhaps this was because theological modernism is a theory of doctrinal development that needed no mention in a pastoral document. Technological science and theological modernism derived from 18th century Western culture. These derivatives led Dewart to make a further determination concerning the Christian disbelief in God.

> The trouble is that it is becoming increasingly difficult for many Christians — and their numbers proliferate daily — to believe in the authoritarian God as traditionally understood. Indeed, some find themselves compelled by their Christian faith, and constrained by their loyalty to Christ, to his Church, and to the living History in which they live and breathe, positively and actively to *dis-believe* in a divine being who is only in degree and in detail different from primitive deities or from philosophical gods. [131]

Fifty-eight years after Dewart, Richard Rodriguez, the American essayist, expressed his experience of the same phenomenon this way in *Darling: A Spiritual Autobiography*.

> The majority of people who are alive do not find it impossible to believe that a computer can sort and sift, relay, recall, correct, cure, solve, destroy, filch, tabulate, and turn out the lights. An increasing number of people who are alive believe that an all-knowing God — or let us say, an all-caring God — is an impossibility. [132]

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[130] Dewart's italics *Future* 18.
[131] Dewart's italics Ibid. 204.
[132] *Darling* 187.

Further, modern culture has led to the secularization of contemporary thought as the Hellenic roots of Western culture lose their significance and influence and give rise to new patterns of thinking characteristic of a mass culture.

> In recent times, as philosophy has diverged more and more from its Greek presuppositions, and as nature and essence have ceased to be understood as intelligible necessities, the concept of the supernatural has lost its influence for Christian theism. This is one concrete reason why, as I have already suggested, since the mainstream of Catholic *philosophy* has remained Scholastic and hence unsympathetic to the contemporary understanding of nature, Catholic *theology*, especially in those circles that have consciously abandoned Scholasticism (for example, the Teilhardians), or in those specialties that were never dominated by it (for example, in scriptural studies), has increasingly turned to non-Christian, secular thought for philosophical. [133]

Dewart notwithstanding, however, Protestant theology has had its own representative who acknowledges the invasion of secular culture upon traditional Reformed theology but from a different perspective. Within his collection of essays George Grant has noted:

> The Spanish-American philosopher Santayana made the very shrewd distinction between the humanisms that arise out of the Catholic tradition and those that arise in a Protestant climate. Pragmatism is the apotheosis of Protestant humanism. [134]

In an essay entitled 'History as Progress,' Grant remarks that "it has been the destiny of the Western European peoples to be the first to destroy their old religious society and to replace it with modern scientific culture, something radically different from anything that existed in the past." [135] Dewart concluded that modernity can be a positive Christian experience, even if as a minority it sought truth, since in mass culture

> a non-religious order of either everyday experience or scientific explanation lacks faith, professes to have the rigor of black and white and,

[133] Dewart's italics *Future* 209.
[134] *Philosophy* 83.
[135] Ibid. 38.

> wishing to be absolute and self-sufficient, excludes revelation. Christian experience, whether common sense or scientific, on the other hand, is colored by faith. It imports belief into knowledge, not to judge it but to interpret it in relation to existence; not in order to argue *a priori* what is and what is not true, or even what might and might not be true, but in order to discover the inner meaning, or the fuller sense, of the one and only "natural" truth. [136]

While not explicitly referring to the effects of mass culture on the Church as an institution of modern understanding, Dewart offers a description that indicates a new orientation in human ecclesiastical affairs inspired by the spirit of renewal.

> This is why even the semi-conscious reconstruction inspired by Pope John and Vatican II which we call "renewal" threatens, (or promises, according to one's viewpoint), a new style of Christian life. It would be not altogether mistaken to describe the new style already in vigour as more commitment and less devotion, more spirit and less superstition, more autonomy and less authority, more society and less herd, more concern and less worry, more spontaneity and less guilt, more creativity and less rote, more joy and less fear, more humour and less pomposity, more thought and less talk. Being a Christian is much more human and natural today than it appears to have been for a very long time. Well, it is difficult to suppose that the further evolution of Christian belief will reverse this trend. [137]

Appropriately, the Council issued a decree on Mass Media (*Inter Mirifica*). A footnote note on the Decree included by Flannery describes some of the effects of mass media which I think can be applied to mass culture in light of contemporary experience.

> There are communications and communications, we are told: it depends whether what is conveyed accords with the nature of the medium used, whether it is conveyed with proper intentions, who conveys it, whether its source is a private one or an official one, what audience it is addressed to, and therefore

[136] *Future* 211.
[137] *Foundations* 484.

> how far the audience is able to form a critical judgment about it, how far the reader listener, or viewer is likely to evaluate it, at what time and place it is conveyed, and therefore who has access to it. And finally the passage [Art. 4] points out the special effect each medium has on the senses, and the overpowering influence all may exert on the inexperienced. … A series of pictures may be so dramatic as to overwhelm people's judgment, leaving them defenceless against the impressions to which they are exposed. [138]

But given the effects of mass communication, has modern culture brought about any change in philosophy? Dewart answered:

> Modern philosophy has been demythologized only in the limited sense that it has been freed from bondage to the traditional form of ecclesiastically promoted religious belief. [139]

Para. 56.

> "Increased exchanges between cultures ought to lead to genuine and fruitful dialogue between groups and nations. What, however, is to be done to prevent such exchanges from disturbing the life of communities, destroying traditional wisdom and endangering each people's native characteristics? How is the dynamism and expansion of the new culture to be fostered without forfeiting loyalty to inherited traditions? This question is of particular relevance in a culture where the enormous progress of science and technology must be harmonized with a culture nourished by classical studies from various traditions."

The question posed here is how is modernity to be integrated within traditional ecclesiastical life without that life either being altered or destroyed, or a third unacceptable form of ecclesiastical expression being developed. The question is posed by the Council Fathers without any apparent understanding of the true nature of science. But the scientific process was very much a reality for

[138] *Flannery* 549.
[139] *Challenge* 220.

Pearson, a scientist himself, who had experienced such tension when he came to realize that the theory of evolution could not be reconciled with the Christian faith.

> It may well be that part of the problem lies in an incorrect grasp of the meaning of science, and if so, science must itself become aware of its true nature before it can be reconciled with religion. [140]

The merger of modernity and tradition is the "crisis of modern knowledge" which Dewart suggests has been at the root of the Cuban Revolution. Classical Spanish Catholicism was not easily merged with a Cuba aspiring to enter the modern era.

> This is not the occasion to relate the history of how we arrived at the crisis of modern knowledge. It is more relevant to note that there is a twofold historical process by which the crisis was brought about. Pope John XXIII, with a keen historical sense, has clearly abstracted this and brought it to the attention of Christians everywhere. "One of the typical factors which characterize our age," he writes in *Mater et Magister*, "is socialization, understood as the progressive multiplication of relations in society, with different forms of life and activity, and juridical institutionalization. This is one of many historical factors, among which must be numbered technical and scientific progress, a greater productive efficiency and a higher standard of living among citizens." But, as the pope also points out, the intensification of social relations implies the intensification of every human process and therefore also of all the problems that man and society must face: "socialization multiplies the form of organization and makes the periodical control of relations between men of every walk of life ever more detailed." [141]

From a critical perspective, Dewart did not conceive cultural nourishment via classical studies from various traditions as part of the modern problem. The problem was that modern technological science was incongruent with the ecclesiastical tradition and when consciously integrated into contemporary ecclesial life introduced new perspectives including divergent conceptualizations of God. He concluded:

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[140] *Development* 16.
[141] *Christianity* 194.

> Ultimately, we may have to do with divergent conceptualizations of the God of Christian belief as a result of increased cultural exchanges. [142]

In identifying the cause of the rejection of inherited tradition, Dewart suggests that society has evolved beyond its medieval status.

> What we are witnessing today might be more accurately envisioned as a resolution of the very problem of which the reformation was an unfortunately abortive issue, namely, the integration of Christian belief with the *post-medieval* stage of human development. [143]

Interestingly, Auguste Sabatier offers a similar understanding of modernity not being able to be successfully integrated into a classical understanding of the Protestant Christian faith.

> The Reformation displaced the centre of the Christian consciousness. At the same time there began a scientific revolution which displaced the centre of the universe. I speak of that which is connected with the names of Copernicus ad Kepler, and which was continued by such men as Galileo, Newton, and Laplace. Modern astronomy, geology, biology, etc., have completely changed the outlines and the horizon of our philosophy, and rendered forever impossible the popular cosmologies which, until then, had reigned supreme. And who does not see the bearing of this revolution on our views of scripture, on its cosmology in particular, and on many of its minor teachings? The traditional doctrines of creation have been greatly modified, as also the doctrines as to the origin of evil, suffering, and death. These discoveries, it is said, have ruined religion, and are destroying Christian faith. Not so. What is being destroyed is the débris of an ancient philosophy. But they do compel us, absolutely, if we would remain in touch with *the thought of our age,* to modify the formulas by which the Church has hitherto believed that she might render an account of the origin and evolution of the universe. [144]

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[142] *Future* 14.
[143] Dewart's italics *Future* 15.
[144] My italics *Outlines* 254.

For Dewart, harmonization of culture is not to be found in a return to classical studies as noted above. And he viewed nostalgic thinking as an obstacle to intellectual progress.

> We have largely turned away from our traditional self-definition because our experience contradicted it, but our retention of the assumptions on which such definition was erected makes us yearn for its false comforts, and at the same time, forbids our devising satisfactory rational alternatives to it. [145]

Dewart contrasts the progress of science and technology with the lack of significant progress throughout philosophical thinking in the major periods of intellectual thought. The Council seems to have also neglected this aspect of doctrinal development.

> Being highly conscious (as my philosophical education had, by chance rather than design, made me) of the continuity of the history of philosophy throughout its three major epochs, [146] it seemed to me that in order to understand the situation of philosophy today it would be essential, first, to go back to the very beginning of the tradition, and, second to pay special attention to the tradition from the mediaeval to modern philosophy. Only then could one begin to grasp the inexorable logic of the process whereby modern philosophy unwittingly condemned itself, in the end, to having to explain the mind on the basis of assumptions that make it impossible to do so. [147]

And, if Sabatier is correct in his assessment, to return to the beginning of tradition is what the Reformers attempted when they discovered the continuity of the history of philosophy. And similar to Dewart they underwent a change in their personal thinking.

> You have only to read the biography of the Reformers and to make a slight analysis of their soul to form an entirely different idea of their work. The first and almost the only question which preoccupies and troubles them is an exclusively religious and practical question: 'What must we do in order to be justified before God? How may we attain to peace of soul and to the assurance of pardon and of life eternal?' To find this peace, this pardon and salvation,

[145] *Evolution* 367.
[146] In my understanding these epochs are Hellenic, Mediaeval and Modern.
[147] *Challenge* 9.

> which the Church could not procure for them, they determined to turn back and quench their thirst at the primitive sources of the Gospel. They went back to the original documents because they were persuaded that Christianity had been corrupted in the course of centuries; they wished to have it in its purity. Their whole reformation was to consist in this restoration of primitive faith. [148]

So, how is the dynamism and expansion of the new culture, which the Council acknowledges, to be fostered without forfeiting loyalty to inherited traditions? On a personal level an answer to this question was tentatively provided by Gregory Baum, a contemporary of Dewart, who taught at the same university. Baum saw a solution in the actions of the "third man" who appeared as a new kind of believer.

> The third man is a Catholic. He regards the Church as his spiritual home. He is deeply attached to the Catholic tradition. At the same time, he takes the institutional Church with a grain of salt. He loves Catholic teaching when it makes sense to him, when it gives him access to new life and enables him to respond to the demands the world makes on him; but if the teaching does not make sense to him, he does not bother with it. He does not wish to argue with other Catholics about it. It would not occur to him to argue with the bishops or the pope. If these teachings make sense to other Catholics, the third man thinks they should accept them wholeheartedly. … He makes his own choice; he does not feel guilty about it. He wants to leave other people free to make up their own minds. The third man, moreover, acknowledges the law of the Church. He is no rebel. He believes in law and order. At the same time, he realizes that human life is complex and that there are situations in which ecclesiastical law does not promote the spiritual well-being of persons. In those cases he feels free to act apart from canon law and, if necessary, move to the margin of the ecclesiastical institution. [149]

In short, the "third man" is philosophically and sociologically mature, according to Baum.

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[148] *Outlines* 208.
[149] *Credibility* 201.

Para. 57.

> "There is no doubt that modern scientific and technical progress can lead to a certain phenomenalism or agnosticism; this happens when the scientific methods of investigation, which of themselves are incapable of penetrating to the deepest nature of things, are unjustifiably taken as the supreme norm for arriving at truth. There is a further danger that in their excessive confidence in modern inventions people may think that they are sufficient unto themselves and abandon the search for higher values."

The Council has stated the issue in negative terms citing the philosophical abuse of science as the culprit. However, from the earliest stages of his thinking, Dewart presented the same situation in positive terms where speculation is not the answer. Pearson, a scientist, and thus not a speculator, did not abandon the search for higher religious values in his quest for a "creed of life," nor abuse the scientific approach. According to Dewart Pearson said:

> "Be it true or not that there is a God, my nature requires at least that I shall believe there is one, and in this I have not advanced beyond the feeling of the great mass of my brother men." … The next step, therefore, is to investigate whether science has a better creed to offer. … It seems prima facie reasonable, that the great claim of science to command respect and admiration lies in its objectivity, then the contemporary veneration of science would seem to be an index of the fact that 'we are growing objective and ceasing to be subjective. Speculative spirit, and a philosophy which transcends experience, are but the marks of a period of decadence,' said Pearson. [150]

Dewart further quoted Pearson, whose background was formed within the tradition of religious dissenters, as saying:

> Yes, man has something of the Godhead in him; vain to deny it, and yet so hard to discover it in the individual. [151]

[150] *Development* 22/23.
[151] Ibid. 25.

Pearson's attitude to science influenced Dewart throughout his career concerning the development of modern philosophy. It was Dewart's contention that science's positive attitude resulted in a basic religious perspective for Pearson.

> If the account presented in the foregoing chapters an account of the nature and development of Pearson's philosophy and its culmination in the concept of scientific inference as statistical is at all accurate, then it could not be entirely wrong to say that Pearson's philosophy is essentially a religious one. And if the term religion seems too loaded down with impressions and varying connotations, let us say then that Pearson's philosophy is essentially an ethical one. [152]

Dewart does not cast the contemporary problem of the "Church and the modern world" as phenomenalism or agnosticism. Rather, the problem is one of human experience. He cautions that one ought not mistake

> the problem of the 'Church and the modern world,' meaning the problem of reconciling the holy and the secular enterprises of man: God's religion *and* man's political organization, man's social life, man's economic existence, man's technological world. The objection to this is not only that the opposition between theistic faith and everyday experience is not an opposition between the human and the divine, but also that the 'outward' novelties and the 'secular' changes that make up the contemporary world are but manifestations of a profound change in the mode and nature of human experience itself. [153]

Concerning the difference between religious belief and religious illusion, for Dewart modern science is not conceived as the enemy of belief as an illusion. Rather, similar to Freud's own conclusion, the solution for the illusion of belief, said Dewart, is the *proper* development of human consciousness. Freud believed in human progress.

[152] *Development* 89.
[153] Dewart's italics *Future* 15.

> The only future that can be reasonably forecast for the illusion of belief is that the heightening of human consciousness will in due time dispel it. [154]

Dewart cited Teilhard de Chardin as an example of such further conscious scientific enlightenment.

> Teilhard's thought was not an apologetic endeavour to "harmonize" science and the traditional conceptualizations of the Christian faith. It was a creative attempt to follow through to its ultimate consequences a scientific and fully contemporary (scientific) experience in the light of Christian faith, which on the one hand, functioned to make that scientific experience religiously meaningful, but which, on the other, required interpretation and re-conceptualization in the categories of contemporary experience for the very sake of illuminating that everyday scientific experience. [155]

He expressed the same concerns as the Council, but not from an over-estimation of the dominance of an all-inclusive science. Rather Dewart's concern was over a philosophical perspective that was too dependent upon theological support.

> The Christian thinker should, therefore, be able to determine the contingency of creatures from a philosophical analysis of them precisely as contingent beings; that is, from a consideration of creatures not as creatures, not as dependent upon uncreated being, but from a consideration of them simply as they are in themselves and as they are immediately known by the philosophical intellect prior to all enlightening of the philosophical intellect by faith. [156]

Dewart's perspective is not so much as the mistrust in modern investigations and inventions, but more accurately as the over-confidence in revelation of modern consciousness in the Greek concept of knowledge. Philosophers have considered

> the meaning of the empirical fact that consciousness is self-positing; that whether or not external things exist, the mind itself cannot know itself except as existing, and that, thus, consciousness is not definable in

[154] *Future* 22.
[155] Ibid. 43.
[156] *Foundations* 185.

> abstraction from its subjectivity, or in abstraction from the self which is given *in* and *to* it. But to reconsider this was, in effect, first to put in doubt the adequacy of the very *concept* of knowledge which went back to the Greeks, and, second, to redefine knowledge on a *consciously* empirical basis. [157]

Thus, the explanations of human evolution offered by science are not satisfactory, rather, philosophy and history are the better choices for an interpretation of the process of evolution.

> If we understood sufficiently well how human nature came into being, we would have mastered why the conditions of human life today are such as they are — which would, of course, facilitate our improving them. Undertaking to investigate the matter anew, however, and under philosophical auspices, implies what is much less obvious: that the explanations of human evolution devised so far by science are neither as satisfactory nor as useful as they might be, and that philosophy might help remedy those defects. [158]

Dewart recognizes that Christian belief has posited a God, in contrast to other gods, that cares for humanity, and who takes into consideration an account of human desires. This is not an implausible hypothesis he notes, and further suggests that

> the classical theological problem of "freedom and grace" — has fuelled the inner development of our originally Christian culture, and is responsible for (a) the increasing awareness of the modern Western secular mind of the reality and the value of human freedom, (b) its dwindling belief in fate, and (c) its ever-growing conviction that the outcome of individual and collective human striving rests in human hands. [159]

Unlike the perspective of the Council, however, Dewart is inclined to view progress in modern technological science as an advancement in consciousness. Yet despite this advancement Western philosophers, still depend on a higher mind to furnish meaning for human existence. Dewart made this observation.

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[157] Dewart's italics *Foundations* 225.
[158] *Evolution* 3.
[159] Ibid. 335.

> What we cannot easily do — though the phenomenological peoples do it effortlessly — is to realize that human existence can be meaningful and rewarding even if its purpose is not preordained but created by consciousness for itself by valuing itself. [160]

A paradigm shift has in fact taken place in human thinking and learning. That is, knowledge has been conceived without reference to the gods or any supernatural source. Revelation is not the sole source of knowledge ever since human scientific thinking has come of age. Dewart noted that in the modern ecclesial world this paradigm shift has posited the

> the question of the validity of reason*, independently of revelation*, as a means to obtain knowledge about ourselves and about the world. [161]

A further development in contemporary philosophical thinking within this paradigm shift was that

> instead of "doing" their existence for them, God provides creatures with the means to *actualize by and for themselves* the "act" that God has given them for that purpose. [162]

Having provided an introduction to Dewart's philosophical thinking in light of the spirit of renewal of Vatican II as expressed in *Gaudium et Spes*, I now turn to the supplementary documents: *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (7 December, 1965), *Optatam Totius,* Decree on the Training of Priests (28 October, 1965) and *Gravissimum Educationis,* Declaration on Christian Education (28 October, 1965).

[160] *Evolution* 346.
[161] Dewart's italics *Challenge* 148.
[162] Dewart's italics Ibid. 160.

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS

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Presbyterorum Ordinis

Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (7 December, 1965)

Para. 19.

> "A sacred minister's learning ought itself be sacred in the sense of being derived from a sacred source and directed to a sacred purpose. Primarily, then, it is drawn from reading and meditating on sacred scripture. It is also fruitfully nourished by the study of the Fathers and Doctors of the church and the other traditional classics. Moreover, if priests are to give adequate answers to the problems discussed by people at the present time, they should be well versed in the statements of the church's magisterium and especially those of the councils and the popes. They should also consult the best approved writers in theology."

The first observation is that there is no mention of the role of philosophy in the sacred minister's life, nor a renewal of philosophy with respect to the ministry and life of priests. Scripture and theological studies are placed in the forefront of a priest's training. This devalues the attention on classical studies in their own right which are in need of philosophical reinterpretation appropriate to the 21st century and beyond. The introduction of scripture studies, as an intellectual discipline, is a contemporary and evolutionary development beyond scholastic formation. Mythological, poetical and allegorical interpretation of the Old and New Testaments no longer satisfies contemporary intellectual needs. However, scriptural studies are not the context in which Dewart began his study of Karl Pearson's contribution to philosophy. Dewart's context of study began with a pre-religious understanding in contrast with the Council's suggested formation for clergy. Dewart's perspective on Peason's insights was that

> henceforth, the question was to account for the universe without the use of religious concepts and of course this applied first of all to the origin of man and of life. [163]

Earlier, he specifically quoted Pearson:

> Here was a distinct scientific denial of Biblical history. Science had proclaimed war against Religion, and must now account for life, without an instantaneous creation. [164]

The Council sought to liberate Scripture from dependence on a literal interpretation and the primitive cosmology into which it had fallen. Liberating the scriptures from an inadequate understanding through science would allow the scriptures to sanctify and redeem persons and nations according to the mind of their authors. However, scientific understanding was, in fact, not as free from the inadequacies of ancient philosophy as the liberators thought. In this regard Dewart criticizes contemporary scientific thinking.

> Scientists, to their disadvantage, frequently ignored an elementary historical fact: that the "new philosophy," as science was long referred to, received many of its fundamental concepts from the "old" philosophy, medieval Scholasticism; causality was one of these. And the Scholastic idea of causality harked back, in part to the Old Testament doctrine of creation. Now, in the original metaphorical and mythological categories of Scripture, man and world were envisioned as the "child" and the "handiwork" of the heavenly "Father" and "Maker" of all things. Centuries before the Middle Ages, however, Christian theologians had reformulated that biblical teaching by resorting to the Greek philosophical concept of "'causality" (*aitia*). According to the Greeks, a cause was a source of "necessity" (*anankē*), that is, the exertion of a compelling force that brought about change, and without which no change could take place. For a thousand years before Scholasticism the world had accordingly appeared to Christians as a system of natural forces — a hierarchy of "causes" and "effects" — which

[163] *Development* 23.
[164] Ibid. 23.

> had itself been caused by the all-necessitating power of a transcendent First Cause. [165]

The absence of philosophy in scriptural interpretation draws attention to the independent role of scripture. Here the Council is attempting to establish scripture as the sole relevant discipline for the spiritual life. That is, scripture has a "pastoral purpose" that philosophy, in the mind of the Council, seems to lack in its ability to enhance the spiritual life of humans. However, it is worth noting that the

> renewed cultivation of letters promoted the foundation of the European universities, first in Bologna in 1119, then in Paris in 1150 and Oxford in 1167. And Greek thought now came hand in hand with Arabic thought, which had original ideas of its own. The institution of "scholasticism" — the pursuit of theological knowledge not merely for "pastoral" but principally for intellectual purposes — had been spontaneously engendered much earlier by the practice of theologians. [166]

[165] *Evolution* 5.
[166] *Challenge* 147.

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Optatam Totius

Decree on the Training of Priests (28 October, 1965)

Para. 15.

> "Philosophical subjects should be taught in such a way that students are first of all gradually led to a solid and coherent knowledge of human nature, the world and God. At the same time they should take account of modern philosophical developments, particularly those of influence in their own country, as well as recent progress in the sciences, so that with a proper understanding of the present age, they will be equipped for dialogue with people of their time. The history of philosophy should be taught in a way that enables students to grasp the basic principles of the various systems, hold fast to the elements proved to be true and recognize and refute the roots of error."

Although mentioning traditional philosophy as a basis for its general theological development, the Council's perspective in this document advances the notion of modernization in its thinking as an attempt to up-date and adjust to the influence of the technological sciences. The Council attempted an *aggiornamento.* This is not a novel experience for human religious or secular intellectual advancement in light of the understanding of the evolution of ideas. Pearson's experience of the integration of the progress of science with philosophy resulted in Pearson's particular conclusion. According to Dewart:

> Pearson's fully developed view is that, since knowledge is identical with virtue and religion, and since science is the only true and reliable type of knowledge, then science is the only reliable basis of religious and moral thought. [167]

[167] *Development* 2.

Pearson's reasons for this conclusion have roots in the spirit of renewal that began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with regard to scholasticism's failure to update itself in light of the advancement of technological science. This renewal in particular to Western philosophical thought and not evident in the philosophy of other major traditions, i.e., the Islamic. That is, with the significance of the contribution of modern science, philosophy is no longer a reliable corrective for an outdated theological apologetic. Rather, the contemporary philosopher will need to admit that truth and wisdom are inherent in more than one system of thought. In short, the philosopher will need to be a wise man. As Moritz Schlick has written:

> I hope I have not been misunderstood as though I were advocating an actual separation of scientific and philosophical work. On the contrary, in most cases future philosophers will have to be scientists because it will be necessary for them to have a certain subject matter on which to work — and they will find cases of confused or vague meaning particularly in the foundations of the sciences. But, of course, clarification of meaning will be needed very badly also in a great many questions with which we are concerned in our ordinary human life. Some thinkers, and perhaps some of the strongest minds among them, may be especially gifted in this practical field. In such instances, the philosopher may not have to be a scientist — but in all cases he will have to be a man of deep understanding. In short, he will have to be a wise man. [168]

In line with such a perspective, I think Dewart's philosophical, but tentative conclusions, arising from the various systems of epistemology are very much in keeping with the spirit of renewal of his day. He wrote:

> Ultimately, we may have to do with divergent conceptualizations of the God of Christian belief. [169]

The Judeo-Christian theological sequence is to put in order, God, the creation, and human nature. This sequence objectively reflects the human experience of creation from the perspective of an

[168] Schlick, Moritz. "Form and Content: An Introduction in Philosophical Thinking," in *Gesammelte Aufsatze* 1926 - 1936. Vienna: Gerold, 1938, pp. 117-134. [p. 133] (First published in *College of the Pacific Publications in Philosophy*, vol. 31, no. 3, (313-318), Pennsylvania State University Press.)
[169] *Future* 14.

philosophical wisdom. And despite its flaws, James Feibleman considered this objective order somewhat flattering, even though subjectively inadequate. He preferred a subjective view that he called, "the subjective digression."

> Briefly, the prevailing Greek view of man, which we can think of as a kind of realistic dispensation, was a view taken from the outside, and man himself a figure in a natural landscape. The modern scientific view of man is consistent with this Greek view. But European philosophy from its start took a different turn. Most of the European philosophers sought to look at man from the inside, as a figure quite distinct from his background and not an integral part of it. I call this European view "the subjective digression" because it occurs after the Greeks and despite modern science. … The beginnings of the subjective digression were foreshadowed when Greek philosophy was taken over by the scholastics. The religious interests were in man, God, and the relations between them, and it was never understood that the relations between them were mediated by the material world. Hence the interest in the material world, which had been maintained so sedulously by the Greeks, lagged, and the importance of man in relation to God rose accordingly. Despite the knowledge of human frailty and the acute sense of sin, it was a very flattering view of man. [170]

However flattering, in light of the thesis of this study, the objective theological order must be set alongside the subjective order, since alone, it is, in fact, inadequate for the 21st century of Western culture. Thus, upon reflection, the Conciliar directives concerning an updating of theism remain objective and as a result have not quite influenced the modern world to any degree. Dewart concluded in his significant philosophical work.

> What we are witnessing today might be more accurately envisaged as a resolution of the very problem of which the Reformation was an unfortunately abortive issue, namely the integration of Christian belief with the post-medieval stage of human development. [171]

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[170] *New* 4.
[171] *Future* 15.

Para. 16

> "The following order should be observed in dogmatic theology: let biblical themes be treated first, then what the Fathers of the Church (both east and west) have contributed to the faithful transmission and expansion of revealed truths, followed by the later history of dogma, including its relation to the general history of the church. Then, in order to throw the fullest light possible on the mysteries of salvation, let them learn through speculation guided by St. Thomas to enter them more deeply and see how they are interconnected, to recognize how they are present and active in liturgical celebration and in the whole life of the church. Let them also learn to use the light of divine revelation in seeking the solution to human problems to apply its eternal truths to the changing condition of human life, and to communicate these truths in a way the modern world can understand."

The encouragement of biblical studies, despite this paragraph which restricts the spirit of renewal by reserving the philosophical education of priests to the perspective of St. Thomas. There is no recognition of the advancement made in philosophical thinking since the Middle Ages. In addition, there is no explicit mention of considering science as a modern method for interpreting the Church's dogma. But to his credit, Dewart had no intention of dismissing the legacy of St Thomas.

> As an impression this is not a rare view among Catholics today: the irrelevance of Scholastic philosophy to the 20th century is no longer the uncommon assumption that it had been until recent times. However, although I concur with the general truth which this judgment expresses, certain qualifications seem to me to be in order. First, it is not enough to operate under impressions, however valid these may in fact be. The contemporary Church, or the contemporary Catholic philosophical community, should beware of dismissing Scholasticism in general, or neo-Thomism in particular, and least of all the thought of St. Thomas himself, either on the basis of impressions or, in any invent, in principle or wholesale. [172]

[172] *Foundations* 40.

But clearly adaptations need to be made in light of the Christian experience, not just in light of the Catholic experience. The suitability of St. Thomas for Christian thinkers outside the Roman Church is what makes his thought truly universal. As a matter of fact, Dewart went on to say:

> Contemporary *Christian* thought should now complete what St. Thomas only initiated, and should revise what contemporary thought has achieved. [173]

Concerning intellectual speculation, the ecclesiastical hierarchy has placed contemporary philosophy on the back burner with regard to priestly studies. The spirit of renewal has not penetrated very deeply into intellectual speculation. Making a distinction between Catholic and Protestant academics, Dewart noted that what Catholic academic scholars studied as Fundamental Theology, Protestant scholars studied as the Philosophy of Religion. However, he encourages a new description for such studies "to communicate these truths in a way the modern world can understand."

> I believe that *Theological Philosophy,* which is my own preference, may be at least as good as any of the more usual expressions, and I hope that this coinage will gain favour and come to fill a useful role in the contemporary Christian academic world. [174]

Theological philosophy is Dewart's non-dogmatic intellectual approach to interpreting the notion of divinity in the modern world. The same thought is echoed by a contemporary of Dewart's, Gregory Baum.

> In the past our love for truth took on a different form. We believed that the full truth of Christ, available in the Catholic Church alone, was the greatest treasure that we had received, and we thought that it was our task to protect this treasure against human thought and values that constituted the culture to which we belonged. While we were willing to learn in may subjects, there were always some subjects in which we thought we had nothing to learn. On the basis of the doctrinal system we inherited, we made up our minds very quickly as to what we might accept from others. We entered into conversation, we read books, and

[173] Dewart's italics *Foundations* 48.
[174] Ibid. 11.

saw films, not to *learn* from others but to *evaluate* the the ideals of others in the light of Catholic doctrine.[175]

[175] Baum's italics *Faith* 4. The book bears a Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur.

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Gravissimum Educationis

Declaration on Christian Education (28 October, 1965)

Para. 11.

> "The church anticipates great benefits from the activities of the faculties of the sacred sciences. For to them she confides the very grave responsibility of preparing her own students, not only for the priestly ministry, but especially either for teaching in the institutes of higher ecclesiastical study, or for the advancement of learning by their own investigations, or finally by undertaking the even more exacting duties of the intellectual apostolate. It is the function also of these faculties to promote research in the different fields of sacred learning. Their object will be to ensure that an ever-growing understanding of sacred revelation be achieved, that the inheritance of Christian wisdom handed down by former generations be more fully appreciated, that dialogue with our separated brothers and sisters and with non-Christians be promoted, and that problems posed by advances in knowledge be addressed."

In light of the notion of a renewal of the spirit of reform, particularly with respect to philosophy which is not classified as a sacred science, this paragraph is a disappointment. First, it is reserved to the church's "own students" and secondly it is concentrated on a narrow "intellectual apostolate" as contrasted with a pastoral apostolate. Given his understanding of the spirit of renewal Dewart it is clear that Dewart has a wider horizon with respect to the world and Christian education. He expressed his broader perspective this way:

> We do not give our love to the world so that it may come into the Church;
> the Church was placed on earth so that we may give our love to the world.

> We do not want the world to embrace the the Church; we want the Church to embrace the world. [176]

However, in embracing the world with respect to Christian education, both Leslie Dewart and Gregory Baum engaged in an expanded understanding of the "intellectual apostolate" which included a reflection on the Church's own self-understanding. The intellectual apostolate is a subjective, as well as an objective, undertaking. Objective in that it involves an engagement with the belief of non-Catholic Christians and their traditions, and subjective in that it engages the Church's traditional self-understanding of God. As Dewart has acknowledged:

> More concretely, it will be suggested that the integration of theism with today's everyday experience requires not merely the *demythologization of scripture* but the more comprehensive *dehellenization of dogma*, and specifically that of the Christian doctrine of God. [177]

Dewart's visionary and insightful view of Christian wisdom is that it is to be found in the evolutionary understanding of religion. The revelation of Christian wisdom has not come to an end.

> In other words, Christianity may well have to learn to abide by the consequences of its own revolutionary ferment upon the human race. The Christian Church will have to take the results of having promised man, I do not say, Heaven, but God himself. One cannot let the Gospel loose in the world and expect that nothing drastic will happen. One cannot tell people that God lives among them and becomes one of them, and that the truth shall make them free, and that death has no sting, and that the *eschaton* of time is at hand and to be hoped for — one cannot in a word, preach Christ crucified and yet reasonably expect that the world will go on much the same as before. The introduction of the Gospel into the history of man was an evolutionary event. I do not see how anything that anyone should at this late date do, could possibly change that historical fact. No, man evolved into man — and presumably this did not occur while God was busy elsewhere. And man did not cease to evolve when he evolved into man. Man has

[176] *Christianity* 196.
[177] Dewart's italics *Future* 49.

> evolved, indeed, even since he became civilized. Are we to believe that man has not evolved since he became Christian? He has evolved in modern times, in the last century, and possibly even in our own generation's time. Man has never ceased to evolve, and probably never will for as long as he is man. And man's religion must evolve with man. … The evolution of man has proceeded along the dimension of consciousness. [178]

The inheritance of Christian wisdom, according to Dewart, will continue with the evolution of Christian humanity. This evolution of Christian wisdom is found within the spirit of renewal of the intellectual apostolate in the Catholic tradition of philosophy.

I think it correct to say that the Church has not not looked critically at itself in the modern world, as called for by Vatican II. However, it rightly focused on the threatening social and external forces that impinged upon it in the modern world. In hindsight and in light of what I have written above I draw the conclusion that, in effect, Christian culture, as a phenomenon, has replaced the Catholic Church, as an institution, as being the operative agent in contemporary society with the most influence. I base my view on an insightful paragraph from Dewart's perspective.

> Hence, I also discard the possibility that *ecclesial* institutions will remain substantially unaltered: the traditional forms of Church structure are far too inadequate to the new needs of the Church. The likelihood of eventual *radical* change in this respect is deducible not so much from the conscious efforts of many insufficiently progressive elements in the Church who wish to refashion (while invariably retaining) all the traditional structures, for their reforms are usually unstable and please no one in the end. It is deducible, rather, from the very strength and intransigence of reactionaries, from the outrance and the self-encapsulation of too many officials in the Church, and from the ineffectualness of the very efforts to retain the situation of the past. If enough ecclesial institutions become irrelevant to the life of the Church, reform will not be needed: the institutions will be by-passed. Thus, radical changes are not likely to come either through revolution from without or through evolution of the institutions from within, but through the marginalization of many (or perhaps

[178] *Foundations* 473/474.

> most) of the traditional structures of the Church and the creation of novel ones to take their place. [179]

Yet, despite its proper attention to external threats, the Council did fail to really look to a reevaluation or reconstruction of classical philosophy to suit the needs of modern society. I leave the final word to Dewart as he attempted this reconstruction through a philosophical critique of human cognition, of the appreciation of reality, and of causality of which he was only partially successful.

> As for the suppositions that I propose here concerning cognition, reality and causality as replacements of the traditional versions of these concepts, I recognize that they may amount only to an uncertain and unhelpful step towards the reconstruction of modern philosophy. [180]

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By way of conclusion, then, my main discussion in the prolegomenon has been to highlight the spirit of renewal as it had been promoted by the Second Vatican Council and experienced by Leslie Dewart and expressed in all his writings. A secondary end is that this prolegomenon can function as laying the foundation to posthuman philosophical thinking. But in acknowledging the experience of other Christians, I note that this spirit of renewal has not been reserved to the faithful of the Roman Catholic Church. The Churches of the Reformation have had their own representatives of this spirit. Their understanding was often set forth as a "revision of dogmatics." I see no better way of ending this book on Catholic thinking than by quoting the perspective of one of these Reformed representatives with respect to "future times."

> The revision of dogmas, in principle as well as in fact, is still possible in the Churches founded by the Reformation … This work of revision, then, will be accomplished; of this I have the fullest assurance. We may lack faith and courage to undertake it; but if we fail, God will raise up other workers. Christianity cannot perish; it has never failed to adapt itself to the sate of

[179] Dewart's italics *Foundations* 486.
[180] *Challenge* 9.

> mind and thought of past centuries; and it will find and create the dogmatic form which will suit future times. [181]

The question arises, will the "spirit of renewal," inaugurated by Vatican II be successful in creating a suitable ecclesial form for the 21st century church and beyond?

[181] *Vitality* 76.

ADDENDUM

So, What's "Post" in Philosophical Posthumanity?
An Introductory Reflection

Philosophical posthumanity is a difficult and refractory subject for academic study. Posthuman philosophy amounts to a new *ordering* of our knowledge with its principles being derived from sociology and classical philosophy. Many contemporary philosophers find difficulty in orienting themselves within this new phase of contemporary philosophy due to its complex intellectual background. Thus, some philosophers may deem it futile to inquire critically into that which seems to be a satisfactory philosophical system supporting and interpreting traditional academic disciplines. But for others, particularly *avant-garde* philosophers, to inquire into posthumanity as a phenomenon is a necessary task as posthuman experience is on the threshold of encompassing and re-ordering contemporary human thought. That being the case, the religious philosopher must always keep in mind the history of the role of faith in human life, the role of human desires, and the problems and hopes of human beings. That is to say that the philosopher must understand humanism (humanity) before understanding *post*humanism (*post*humanity) to be a possible and more appropriate philosophical perspective for the 21st century and beyond.

By virtue of its dogmatic character the philosophy of classical humanism affirms that supernatural powers exist and that a relationship with such powers is possible and even necessary in some cases. Classically, this necessity of a relationship with the supernatural powers is expressed in humanism's "sacred history" of religious belief which is not intended to *explain* historical phenomena, but rather to *regulate* human actions in accord with the divine mind. Thus, at every stage of evolution, humans have been philosophizing about the organization and the interpretation of the relationship between the body and mind. In order to guard against unintended error, the humanistic philosophers made an attempt at noting the limitations of body and mind, separately and in relation to each other. The same holds true for posthuman philosophers. They are required to make an appropriate attempt at noting the limitations of body and mind hylomorphically and separately, but within a posthuman context. The answers to humanity's deeper intellectual problems have always been discovered through the cultural approach to philosophy. So will the

answers to the deeper problems of posthumanity be discovered through the cultural approach to philosophy. That is to say when seen from within a posthuman perspective there is the conscious recognition of evolution in philosophical thinking wherein "posthumanism's primary unit of analysis is "humans + tools." [182] I suggest that those philosophers who ponder culture and believe in the value of philosophy, though perhaps not in the specific tenets of some traditions, probably realize that the present-day under-utilization of philosophy, is not adequate for a proper development of the posthuman philosophical mind. Whole future cultures and societies are in danger of self-crippling due to this lack of philosophical interest. But there is hope (through posthumanism) for the maintenance of living philosophical truths which have guided humanity out of barbarism into culture, the loss of which will threaten us with barbarism again. [183]

Philosophers who follow an emanationist perspective tend to ignore multiple sources for establishing personal values in favour of a single source of inner logic from which all else flows in defining and enriching the individual personality. Philosophers reflecting a posthuman perspective abandon this inner logic and view themselves as both defining and enriching the individual personality from multiple sources. Posthuman philosophy is essentially a set of notions shared by individuals. In humanism the major themes of thought tend to converge around a unified centre of individual understanding even if only potentially so. Posthuman philosophers, on the other hand, seem to be developing in the opposite direction and major themes of thought are synthesized into a common point of individual understanding. However, there is a *unity* within posthuman philosophical consciousness whereby a subject *relates* to an object, but that is not to be equated with the *union* of philosophical consciousness whereby a subject *apprehends* an object. It would not be accurate to view posthuman philosophy as a universal phenomenological *fact* because posthuman philosophy is understandable only within the minds of individuals with a similar attitude towards interpreting experience. In posthuman philosophy it is the meaning that the individual gives to life that informs the personality as opposed to an objective set of regulatory norms that give meaning to the individual's personality in classical humanism. Posthuman philosophy is not a social fact like science whose purpose is to prevent humanity from inventing

[182] Mahon, Peter *Posthumanism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury, 2018).
[183] Cf. Malinowski, Bronislaw *Foundations of Faith and Morals* (Humphrey Milford, 1936).

false ideas about the powers experienced in life, and subsequently controlling them under a guise that is really foreign to human nature. These are the powers that were often erroneously transfigured by folklore, legend and myth. Further, posthuman philosophers are conscious of a moral harmony (variously understood) yet characteristic of all human consciousness which is felt to originate from an external source, the location of which cannot be perceived. Yet humans are tempted to conceive this moral harmony as immanent in themselves, representing something within them that is not purely of themselves, i.e., a religious consciousness. Of this religious consciousness, often holistically understood, humanity has never made even the slightest distinct representation except by the aid of religious symbols. [184]

Given moral consciousness, humanism as classically understood accepts two distinct and separate mental states and thus gives the impression that we are conscious of two different realities. One impression is of the real world of profane things and the other impression is of the real world of transcendent or sacred things. The philosophy of posthuman experience rejects this conceived objective *dualism* of reality in favour of an experienced subjective *duality* of reality which understands an object (a *not-me*) as being in an existential relationship with "me," the subject. Posthuman philosophers do not deny, nor do they assert that there is some fundamental set purpose in life, either intrinsic to human nature or extrinsic to human nature, that determines humanity's goals.

However, some sort of set purpose has been the view characteristic of humanistic philosophy. In their turn, posthuman philosophers suggest an alternative understanding in establishing human goals through disclosure within an indeterminant and perpetually evolving human consciousness. Even if it should finally turn out that there is, in posthuman philosophical contemplation, some principle of ultimate determinateness (presently unknown) it need not be assumed, or supposed, that it is of any metaphysical order (a divinity) that intrudes into the course of humanity's goals. [185] Rather, posthuman philosophers consider any advantages of a metaphysical order in terms of mutual cooperation. That is, a co-creative relationship between physical humanity and metaphysical transcendence.

[184] Cf. Durkheim, Emile *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (George Allen & Unwin, 1915).
[185] Cf. Tolman, E C *Purposive Behavior in Animals and Men* (Century Company, 1932).

Posthuman philosophers adhere to the view that individuals do not interpret the present situation exactly as past situations had been interpreted. Rather, an individual consciously defines every present situation only as similar to past situations, particularly if there is a desire to apply a similar solution to a present situation. Posthuman philosophers do not interpret, either in a classical or instinctive manner, existential experiences as humanistic philosophers are wont to do. They reflectively re-interpret experience since living conditions vary. [186] Posthuman philosophers suggest that there is a range of possibilities for further development open to the individual even after stabilization, or "fixity" of the principles of classical humanistic philosophy. Such a range of possibilities gives birth to a creative personality that tries to consciously realize or enact such possibilities in its daily life according to some definitely self-determined aim.

As the individual consciously enacts the possibilities of self-determined aims, the process of personal evolution will become increasingly evident and events will not be seen or understood as being determined in advance. While there is reservation by some humanist philosophers concerning the subjective and objective aspects of consciousness evolving together, there is no such reservation in posthuman philosophy. Mind and matter evolve together. Therefore, the fundamental philosophical principles of posthuman interpretation must be sought in an individual's own nature as well as in its social context, despite any lack of harmony between the individual and the environment. The development of the posthuman person, then, does not take place in a manner similar to the accidental changes of a *static essence* as is the case in classical humanism. Rather, developmental change is the realization of a dynamic human consciousness that continually evolves. Thus, in posthuman society there is likely to be an increasing tendency to appreciate philosophical variety, as compared with the appreciation of the philosophical uniformity of scholasticism of the medieval world. Such variety, of course, will likely result in a personality type that differs from the classical type and which is more at home in the posthuman context.

Such a change in personality leads to a change in consciousness which in turn leads to a change in the focus of philosophy. That is, from a human organic philosophical perspective (humans use

[186] Cf. Thomas, W & Znaniecki, F "The Polish Peasant in Europe and America" in *Social Behavior and Personality: Contributions of W. I. Thomas to Theory and Social Research* Vol. 30 n. 2 (1951).

tools) to a posthuman organic/techno-digital perspective (humans + tools). In light of the evolutionary development of human consciousness, the direction of posthuman philosophical consciousness can only be forward, that is, *beyond* present humanism to a stage of *post* humanism. (Evolution does not move backwards.) The purpose, philosophers might argue, is that the aim of posthuman philosophy is to understand consciously, and subsequently establish goals within one's personal experience, rather than passively accept the principles of philosophical theory as inherited from classical humanism.

When philosophers ask: "Is posthuman truth the same as human truth?" this inquiry begs the question concerning the meaning of *post* in posthumanity. The notion of the ideal philosophical truth of humanism is questioned in posthumanism. Posthuman philosophy does not tolerate an idealism that postulates "a sphere of perfection which does not bear the scars of its origins and, measured by which, all events and processes are shown to be finite and incomplete." [187] Posthuman philosophy is an existential philosophy that interprets life-situations and is not dependent upon any ideological insight to define eternal truth, as does the philosophy of humanism. Rather, posthuman philosophers recognize truth as that which the human correctly (i.e., non-pathologically) recognizes as conforming to experience, interpreted either physically or metaphysically. That is to say, that posthuman philosophers must be nourished by the philosophy of humanism that relies on classical dependability. At the same time, however, they generate unexpected discoveries with respect to the truthfulness of human experience. There is historical evidence for supporting the expectation of the unexpected within the posthuman philosophical perspective. It was never possible to universalize the original Platonism of Hellenic philosophy. The original Platonism of Hellenic thought has undergone numerous revisions and formulations in the forms of Neo-Platonism, Renaissance Platonism, and German Idealism each of which represented a new creation in the philosophical understanding of essence and ideology. Such evolution continues within a posthuman philosophical perspective.

Humanistic philosophy, one might argue from an historical perspective, is dependent upon Hellenistic philosophical principles which are presumed universal, and are in imperfect contact

[187] Cf. Mannheim, Karl *Ideology and Utopia* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1936).

with the particulars of concrete experience. Posthuman philosophy is the opposite. Posthuman philosophy is developing in direct contact with the contemporary organic/techno-digital world, in which the mind renders an appropriate interpretation concerning humanity's earthly experience. Posthuman philosophers aspire to go beyond the bounds of historical existence. Historical existence is "limited" by its cultural boundaries which even though they are perpetually changing, remain within physical limits. Posthuman philosophy, however, transcends physical limits by aspiring to know metaphysical reality through physical reality. As Feibleman noted in his chapter on God, religion becomes the establishment of natural means for obtaining supernaturally permanent ends. [188] Thus, posthuman philosophy would be unfaithful to its task if it were to confine itself solely to the diagnosis of the cultural history of humanity. The posthuman philosopher not historically, nor culturally bound to be the *laudator temporis acti* (the one who praises past times) of classical philosophy.

Humanist philosophers have sought to speak to humanity and, in the West, have succeeded to a great degree. Posthumanism is not an issue for Eastern philosophies untouched by Western intellectual ideas. I speculate that humanism's failure to speak globally to humanity is due more to a narrowness of knowledge, than to a narrowness of intention. Posthuman philosophers are focused on the effort of the human species (*homo sapiens*) to understand itself and its relationship to other species. They inquire beyond classical philosophy in enabling the human agent to direct conscious evolution towards posthuman goals. Such goals are *post* human when they transcend classical philosophy's passive acceptance of a pre-determined purpose. Since posthuman philosophers address the self-interpretations of humanity at the levels of various forms of the organic/techno-digital culture shaping the future, one can argue that there is ultimately no divine plan. Posthuman philosophers accept that their philosophy is an unrestricted collective effort of the human mind to understand itself as a collective agent. In short, posthuman philosophical understanding is an intentional re-envisioning of the classical philosophical traditions in the intellectual life of the human species. Posthuman understanding reflects a philosophical evolution from classical Western philosophy, through to Renaissance humanism, to contemporary secular thinking and beyond. *Post*humanism has given fresh stimulus to the process of evolution and historical interpretation.

[188] Cf. Feibleman, James *The New Materialism* (Martinus Nijhoff, 1970:180).

Posthuman philosophy can expect to disclose further insights from the interpretation of human techno-digital experience. Especially since human individuals are constituted as organic agents having moral and rational propensities. In short, posthuman philosophers will most likely surpass any understanding that simply defines humanity by its "rational animal nature."

Posthuman philosophers acknowledge humanity's need for a cognitive order in the cosmos that is more than a re-presentation of the biological order. As posthuman philosophical thinking advances it enhances human intellectual consciousness in a way that traditional anthropology and cultural understanding cannot achieve. That is to say, posthuman philosophers seek to determine an appropriate role for that which in the philosophy of humanism has been reflective of the divine in human experience. That is, what humanism calls religion. But they do not seek a role similar to that of classical religious humanism, but they seek an advanced role of human interpretive consciousness (as opposed to Hellenistic epistemology) to address the issues of the sacred or of charismatic experience.

That is to say that posthuman philosophy places classical philosophy in a somewhat secondary position. The classical approach ceases to be useful as a solution to philosophical problems once these problems cease to be relevant to contemporary experience. That is to say that the classical approach ceases to be useful when a former solution is replaced by a better non-classical solution. It is the case that in all academic disciplines, the classics have remained the classics because no better solution has been found. The case is the same in philosophical religious interpretation. A better solution for philosophical religious interpretation in the future may be found within secular revelation, as it were. The notion of progress in posthuman philosophy consists in improving upon the classics by consciously comprehending more deeply the various historical and evolutionary developments of humanity. So, what is *post* about humanism, is that humanity must constantly renew what the classics have commended to humanity. Philosophers in the posthuman age must preoccupy themselves with the classical legacy of the elementary human facts. These are [1] the fear of death (i.e., annihilation), [2] the need for polity, (i. e., managed sustainability), [3] creative authority (i.e., human goals), [4] the horror of chaos (i.e., a purposeful life), and [5] the pressure of scarcity (i.e., environmental issues). All such elementary facts are subject to revision through posthuman philosophical interpretations. No enhanced precision of thought, nor increased quantity

of experience will be able solve these problems to anyone's satisfaction. Only a posthuman philosophy of consciousness which has no boundaries of its own has the potential to solve these problems. That is to say, the lack of philosophical boundaries allows posthuman consciousness to enhance or deepen the experience of the human being who then will be in a position to provide appropriate solutions for contemporary existential problems.